

SUBHADRA
Or
LIFE AFTER DEATH
Containing Evidence of Human
Survival and Continued Affection.

BY
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(ORGANISER, INDIAN SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY.)
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DEDICATED

(With kind permission)

TO

Sheth Tulsidas G. Khatau, as a token of his
genuine sympathy and ardent love for the advance-
ment of Spiritualism in India.

AUTHOR.

FOREWORD.

"Subhadra" is the title of the book written by Mr. V. D. Rishi for the benefit of those interested in spiritualism. Mr. Rishi is a sincere and earnest worker, and in the book he tells in a plain and unvarnished manner the story of the messages he received from his deceased wife. I do not ask the readers to accept Mr. Rishi's narrative without a close scrutiny; but after making allowances for all possible errors and unconscious bias, which the best of us cannot always avoid, I think it will be generally conceded that these pages contain abundant evidence to establish the fact of spirit communication. Few people take sufficient interest in this Science; but the reasons are obvious. There is so much imposture and fraud going on about us in the name of religion and spirituality that a little

I have had several opportunities of attending Mr. Rishi's seances held under the auspices of the Indian Spiritualistic Society and I feel no hesitation in testifying to the genuineness of the phenomena. He has consecrated his whole life to the study and practice of this great subject, and his work narrates multitude of instances, as varied as they can be, of what happens to man after throwing off this mortal cage. It is the first and only book of its kind in India full of original research by a man best qualified for the work, and Mr. Rishi is to be congratulated on bringing out a much needed publication.

Mr. Rishi has left an established and honourable judicial career in the persuit of truth and his work should therefore command the respectful attention of those interested in this branch of knowledge.

Malabar Hill,
BOMBAY.
30th April, 1929. }

JAMNADAS M. MEHTA.

PREFACE.

This book is named after my wife who died prematurely as a result of an operation. The manuscript was ready for a long time, but its publication was delayed owing to various difficulties.

It is divided into nine chapters, of which the first three deal with the initial difficulties, met with, in getting into touch with her, and the invaluable help and advice obtained from Mr. R. A. Bush and Mrs. M. Robertson. The fourth and fifth contain personal matter which has convinced me about her continued existence and identity after death. The desire to serve this cause is the only motive which urged me to place it before the world for a careful analysis and sympathetic consideration. The sixth chapter is devoted to the description of the other world, and is based on the statements of those who are actually staying there. The interesting messages included in the seventh are collected from various experiences, which I could get during my seances. The fate of children in the other world has been described in the eighth chapter which contains their daily life and gives an idea of a school in the spirit-world. The ways of communication are briefly discussed in the last chapter which will serve as a guide to experimenters.

There is hardly any literature on this subject written from Indian sources and it is hoped that my attempt will be sympathetically received by the students of this knowledge.

In conclusion, I have to thank Mr. A. V. Jayakar and Mr. B. G. Joshi B.A. LL.B. who greatly helped me in bringing out this edition, and fully availed of.

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} V. D. RISHI.

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1. Subhadrabai, (the late wife of Mr. Rishi.)

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CHAPTER I

Search.

Strange circumstances prove the old adage "Out of evil cometh good". Never did I expect that the tragic death of my wife will be such an important event, not only to me but to the Spiritualistic Movement in India. The following chapters will show to the readers the truth of the above statement and convince them about the reality of my claims.

The phenomenon of death although so common in this world is not paid due consideration by the people who are usually indifferent to the fate of a deceased person. The great Kalidas said: "Death is natural and life only an accident": but in our ignorance we attach greater importance to that which is only ephemeral and neglect even to know the condition of life in the world, which is the habitation of every mortal being. It is hoped that the world will be enlightened by the description regarding conditions after-death and will begin to think about this subject of transcendental importance.

It is now nearly eight years since the fatal operation which ended the life of my wife. Her disease was never rightly diagnosed. The X-ray photographs of her stomach showed that there was a dilatation of the stomach but no medicinal treatment could cure her from the malady. For four long years she was suffering from acute gastric troubles, could not retain the food for twenty-four hours, and had to use the stomach tube every day to wash off the undigested contents. Just imagine how painful the life must have been to her and it was but quite natural that she felt quite disgusted of this earthly existence. Other circumstances also contributed to that disgust and in some sad moments she looked upon death as the great redeemer. We were hesitating to her undergoing the painful operation but when even the best surgeon advised it and averred that there was no danger whatsoever and that all her troubles would be over in a fortnight we consented to let her undergo that, after an unusually long deliberation. To all outward appearances she did not seem sickly, inspite of the stomach trouble and might have lived for some years more but for the precipitating step which we took on the occasion. The operation was performed by a well known surgeon within the short space of three-fourths of an hour and I thought that

now at least she would be free from that painful disease. But as fate would have it there were complications. Fever followed and she collapsed on the fourth day. I do not want to trouble the readers with several details which they might think unnecessary ; but those who have suffered such shocks will realise my condition at the sight of her collapse. Even now the shock is fresh as on the first day and I am sure would continue so till the last day of my life. At her last moments while standing by her side I asked the surgeon whether she was passing away, but I hardly knew as subsequent events showed that she was intently listening to all my talk and movements.

It will be quite naturally asked whether I am the only person who had such a bereavement and whether others also did not love their wives as passionately as I profess to do. Dear readers, it can never be denied that thousands might have had to bear the sorrow of separation from their dear wives by the cruel hand of death. On this vast earth numberless wives might have passed away in this way and innumerable husbands might have pined for their dear wives. But the subsequent events will of their own accord bring home to the readers the distinguishing feature of the narrative. Very few wives might have communicated with their husbands after

death, describing the next world and giving much useful information. Very few might have consoled their husbands and other bereaved persons by proving their existence in the next world. There is certainly some peculiarity in the manner of death of a woman whose passing over was in some way conducive to prove the continuity of life after death and the possibility of communication with those who have gone over. It is certainly necessary to know the dying account of the woman whose messages have been published all over India as well as in England and whose death has given a great impetus to the Spiritualist Movement in India. The readers will do well to bear in mind these facts while reading the above account.

Immortal Raymond son of the famous scientist Sir Oliver Lodge, who convinced many sceptics by his after-death messages, was simply an engineer in a Battalion in the last Great War. On the same analogy it was desirable to give some preliminary account of my wife, although she was not educated in the modern use of the term. Her virtues and religious fervour deserve to be imitated. But it would be irrelevant to recount here her qualities which had no scope for develop-

ment or appreciation. Suffice it to say that her death is one more instance of the proverb "Those whom God loves die young."

The perusal of the experiences mentioned in this volume may induce the readers to say "shall we also apply ourselves to the search of this Truth"? "Have we no other worldly affairs to engage our attentions"? The only reply which I can give to such inquirers is that it is not the wish of the writer that the people should engage their attention to this pursuit unmindful of their other avocations. On the other hand the writer had several times to warn those who indulge in excess in spirit communication, neglecting their normal duties. The aim of such efforts is to convince the people of the truth of the principles of Spiritualism, as any other branch of the recognised sciences. All men do not take the trouble of experimenting in laboratories or working in observatories to investigate the claims of the scientists. The statements of well known observers and experimenters are implicitly believed without the least hesitation or ridicule. On the same analogy it is reasonable and necessary to rely upon the testimony of psychic researchers who have devoted years of their life for getting at the truth of the

phenomena. The writer will feel his labours amply rewarded if such a belief is created by the evidence collected in this volume. The idea of life after death is not new to India and it is no exaggeration to say that India was the ancient home of Spiritualism, as that of many other branches of knowledge.

The usual consolation offered to a bereaved person gave me little consolation. The teachings about the transitoriness of life and of the immortality of soul did not appeal to me and I yearned to know something about her who had lived so many years of her life with me, who closely participated in my pleasure and pain, who suffered for several years from acute physical troubles, who endured much pain during and after the surgical operation, who greatly pressed me to try the painful remedy, and who for several reasons intently wished to leave this world as early as possible. At the outset I wanted to know only whether she was happy or otherwise. The special reason for this quest was that she had to pass her days under unpleasant surroundings and she got no opportunities to unfold and show her noble qualities of head and heart. It was erroneously supposed that she was devoid of any such qualities which as a matter of fact she possessed to a large extent

Even this small desire was ridiculed and there was no easy way of satisfying it.

After finishing the obsequious ceremonies, I began my search in right earnest. As I thought I might get some help from the Theosophists I wrote to Dr. Besant regarding the matter. I was fortunate to get a sympathetic reply from that venerable lady, wherein she wrote that the passing of a dear person from this side of life was indeed a heavy blow, and that my wife might be visiting me when I was in sleep out of the physical body and that it would possibly be able to see her if I tried to do so. This advice encouraged my curiosity but further correspondence was rather vague and unsatisfactory. As directed I corresponded with Mr. Leadbeater in Australia who also did not say anything more than what I learnt from Dr. Besant. During this interval my efforts in other directions never slackened and I learnt that Mr. R. A. Bush, the President of the International Home Circle Federation would help me in the matter. The means which he suggested greatly enabled me to achieve my object.

He advised me to try Psychometry also through Mrs. Robertson by sending her a letter in my own handwriting, or any article which my

wife used to wear during her lifetime. It is necessary here to explain the meaning of psychometry without which most of the readers will fail to understand the readings which Mrs. Robertson kindly sent to me. The things which we have on our person have the impressions recorded on them which can be felt only by the medium who has developed the faculty of receiving those impressions of our physical senses. There is apparently nothing on the substance which is a mine of information to a psychometric medium.



CHAPTER II

Experiences Through Psychometry

As directed by Mr. Bush, I sent a letter to him in my own hand writing and a silver ring belonging to my wife, and the following impressions were recorded by Mrs. Robertson with the silver ornament of my wife. She wrote "I have gone so hot and my back is burning and aching especially across my shoulders. I feel I cannot hold it and there are pains inwardly as well, more towards the left side of the stomach and I feel faintness and weakness as though my strength is spent. My head pains and makes me dizzy I feel my breath getting shorter."

The above feeling may be due to my wife's illness. The medium receives all the impressions of the person to whom the article belonged. Even the the bodily pain is felt and hence Mrs. Robertson must have had the impressions noted above. The pain on the left side of the stomach is most notable because that was just the place where she had pain during her life-time.

Further on she felt there is a rather stout lady, face rather full, a little long, the eyes look rather closed up. I cannot see the colour of them. The hair is grey, the nose is rather small for the face, the mouth and chin rather large, the lower lip a little thick. There is a good length from the nose to the upper lip and I feel she would be very steady and methodical in all she did, and liked to have things very nice and tidy but did not like a rush. She appears dressed in a black dress with a lot of bead-turning over the front. The words of a hymn go through my mind but do not get all the words clearly. It seems something like 'Oh, for the day that has no end. Oh for the golden share.'

The description of the features resembled that of my wife in many respects. The reference to bead turning is very remarkable as she was and is still in the habit of counting the beads while praying. At the end of the sitting the medium stated "I must give it up for a time. I will have another sitting. I get such pain with this article between the shoulders."

The reason of such a pain may be due to her prolonged sickness which made her disgusted of her life.

On another occasion the medium stated "I get the pain again, do not seem able to get away

from the condition. It seems to stop anything else coming. I seem so shaky as though I can not write properly,—Someone seems to say that I was laid up for many weary months. I seem to see a lady, fair and so white, the face gone very thin, a little long and much smaller towards the chin. The hair are rather curly over the forehead and the eyes are blue. She throws her arms outside the corset with a weary gesture as if she were so tired of so much suffering and yet there is pathetic patience about her. She seems to say it was worth it all."

The prolonged illness had brought upon her a sense of weariness which she must have felt in the above description. Her habit of being steady and methodical is well depicted in the foregoing references. She was patiently bearing all her physical troubles and ailments.

On the next occasion the medium sent me the following reading: "I take hold of the ring. I immediately turn it over and over in my fingers. I have a curious feeling. It has been beaten out by hand in some way and by a native. I see a native sitting or rather squatting. I do not see his face clearly as I seem to be looking at the back of him. He seems to be long and thin. The arms long and thin. The head looks rather flat at the back. He has a lot of curly wooly hair, goes

rather high up towards the front of the head. I am seeing a little side view of the face. It looks long and rather flat, copper in colour, the mouth rather big, lips thick. He appears to have rings in his ears, one ring hanging in another. I have a curious feeling too that he has a mark of some kind on his face, a triangular white patch or something like that. It makes me think of the medicine men, one reads about. I feel there is a kind of dogged perseverance about this man.

The fore-going description can refer only to the goldsmith who prepared the ornament. As far as I am aware of his features, they resemble those stated by the medium. Some portions are of course, inexplicable, but can be accounted for by the intermingling of various impressions and the play of imagination. The medium herself is aware of it and stated "I have several times the names come Vivian and this morning the names come together Vivian Douglas, but hardly like to put it down as the initials V. D. are on the letter, and I fear my own imagination may have played.

Further on she wrote "I felt all the morning I must sit down and write this message. I feel a lady gave it, but do not see anyone. I feel she wants to impress on a gentleman that time is nothing, it does not matter how long it will come,

and that he must keep quieter and never get impatient and he will help me more."

All the circumstantial evidence goes to support the view that the messages must have been conveyed by her.

On the 30th August 1920 while holding the ring, she had the following impressions "Many a pain on the head and an aching back and internal trouble of some kind, seems to be under the heart and affects the heart and makes it beat quickly. I turn this ring over and over in the fingers as though some one would be in the habit of doing that.

God is good. God is Love. Everything comes to those who wait and in His good time it shall be fulfilled. Your impatience hinders and does not help. Time is nothing and of no account. Spiritual progress is slow but very sure. It is all the better for being slow, One does not make so many mistakes. One does not have to retrace one's steps so much. Dwell on the thought of God, of His love. Realize yourself, Realize that Divine part of yourself, that is God. I will open up to you such wonder as you have never dreamed."

The bodily pain followed by the valuable advice of being patient, must have been impressed by her.

After about two months the medium had the following impressions, in a sitting after reading my letter. "I had read your letter and laid on one side. I was sitting quietly with my eyes closed, lifting up my heart in thankfulness to the dear spirit friends who had helped me when I became aware (I can use no other expression) of a beautiful lady, with lovely dark brown velvet eyes, thick dark eye-lashes dark eyebrows, very nicely marked, the cheeks rounded, smooth skin, coppery brown in colour not dark, the lips a little thick, very nicely shaped, the mouth by no means large, the features all nicely proportioned. When I say the lips a little thick I mean compared with ours in this country, but not thick compared with those of darker skin. She stands rather tall and regal looking and looks young and I feel she is dressed for some peculiar occasion I almost say a wedding. Now I feel she is holding her hands over to me showing me backs of them. How can I describe her hands? They are just beautiful. It is as though I am seeing them, as they are in spirit. They are rather small and very nicely shaped. It is as though there is a powerful light behind them, though I see no light, but they look transparent, a very pale pinky look with a golden tinge over it, the golden tinge a little deeper towards the wrist. I feel they should have been of a very coppery colour in the flesh. This description does

not seem good enough. They seem to fascinate me. I do not see any rings on the fingers, but I sense she should have some rather massive ones. She seems to want to attract my attention to one rather smaller. I do not see these but sense them and sense also that she points to one and says love lasts forever, love locks and interlocks the heart,"

The photograph in this book will show to the readers that much of the description of the features is fairly accurate. The medium had not seen her photograph before giving this reading. Her complexion was just as described by the medium although it is very difficult to explain how she got these expressions.

On looking at her photograph, Mr. Bush wrote to me, "The picture of your deceased wife shows her to be a beautiful woman—a beautiful soul with the face of Buddha," Later on he once more wrote to me "your wife has been at one of our circles and seen by two clairvoyants at the same time and she nearly controlled one of the mediums. She is in a puzzled condition and she finds it hard to break away from the slavery of her earthly religious beliefs. I think that unprogressive Hindu priests in the spirit world have dominated her. She must not remain a slave to any religion or to the outward observances of any religion. She must soar high

above them all, into the large truth and must seek other teachers and be persuaded to listen to what they have to say. She is a good beautiful spirit but not yet emancipated from the husks of her old beliefs. Pray for her. Then you will be able to help her, and she will be able to help you, and you will progress together."

The observations in my private circle corroborated the psychometric experiences. I used to ask her about the medium's impressions which she stated were conveyed by her. It is a difficult task to explain how she could manage to give these impressions or could be seen clairvoyantly by two mediums as Mr. Bush wrote but the facts are puzzling and significant.

During my visit to England in 1925 the same medium received the following message from her through automatic writing:—"My dear, dear one, my love for you grows stronger and more intense as time goes on. I am waiting for you and shall be ready to welcome you when your time comes but you have so much to do yet. Be brave, steadfast and true as you have proved yourself and you will find that the way will be made clear. You will be shown what to do and the means will come. Do not worry. Oh, do not worry. All is well, I tried to impress so much upon our sister helper but she

would not give way to me and our mutual friend, (Mr. Bush) has so much on his mind just now. I am with you and I am so happy that you meet each other."

On February 28th of 1928, she communicated through Mrs. Robertson as follows:—"Yes, yes, I come to you, I am so glad, as you think of me again. My love to my husband. I am working with him, opening out into a wider, broader realization of spiritual significance progressing much more quickly than I should have done had I not come in contact with you, had my husband not worked in this cause. I am no longer tied to one idea but expanding and yet keeping with my dear husband, for there is so much I can impress and help him with.

We are indeed becoming closer in spiritual communion of mind, much more than he realizes. Yet he will know soon."

CHAPTER III.

Extracts from Mr. Bush's Letters.

The letters which I received from Mr. Bush contained some very valuable information and advice on this subject. I think it worth while to publish some extracts as they will serve as a guide to the students of this knowledge.

Commenting on my impatience to get into touch with my dear wife he wrote, :“The laws governing spirit intercourse are still so little known but one law we have discovered and that is that over anxiety—over eagerness—excessive grief—excessive desire is the greatest obstacle to satisfactory linking up. It produces either a too disturbed mental and psychic condition or a too positive condition for its communion to be effected for good results. That is possibly the reason why you yourselves and your medium have been so far unsuccessful in obtaining a message from your loved one, on the otherside of the veil. It is a worldwide experience in the science of medicine that a doctor cannot usually treat his wife and children as effectually as a doctor not so closely

connected, That is an analogy—a very close one for spirit communion.

“Also you desire to know the method of obtaining the direct voice or other phenomena. This is not practised by any magical rite or formula or apparatus, or by any at present known physical law. Ninety percent of the process is worked from the spirit—side by its experts there. All we can do is to supply the material and the proper conditions. The first is to discover a medium most suited for a particular kind of phenomena, for all media have not the same gift. One is good for clairvoyance, another for clairaudience, and psychometry, another for trance-speaking, some for materialization, some for voice, some for levitation, some for automatic writing etc. And then having discovered the medium, you have to discover the best sitters for a circle. Then having composed the best circle you must bring each one the best mental conditions. But then last, but not the least every one must be in perfect harmony each with the other and the outside world and have infinite patience.”

The readings which Mrs. Robertson, the psychometric medium, sent to me were not so satisfactory as I wished to have. I wrote to Mr. Bush my opinion whereupon he stated “It is not

easy to obtain very definite results and especially under these conditions since you are in India and we in very disturbed England, and there is no connection save letters and a ring. Is it not rather extraordinary and encouraging that my friend has got as much as she has? Because if an inanimate object can retain or absorb the vibrations of human beings etc. it must become wiped off with the vibrations of all the people and places it passes through. That is why very clear cut and definite readings are difficult to get."

With regard to some of my wife's message bearing on religious matters he wrote "When say a christian passes into spirit-life he still remains a member of christian religion for quite a long time. When a Hindu, Budhist, Muslim etc., dies he adheres to his Hindu, Budhist, Muslim mode of thought and practice. And when a recently deceased person returns to communicate he naturally believes his religion to be the only true one. If he were a passionate, strong-minded, narrow-minded devotee of his religion he might not change his views for a long time. The law of affinities (like unto like) works and the christians are drawn to each other, the muslims to each other the Hindus and so on to each other, and form large associations and communities retaining their earth ideas and teaching. In course of time their

minds open—they discuss—they inquire—and find that truth has many ways of expressing itself and eventually learn that all religions are based on truth and the same truth. Then they break away from belonging to any one religion and become universalists. They see God everywhere, in all things and in all philosophies. They become above religious forms or creeds even as the universal spirit, the All Father, the all-minded, the all person is above them all. That is why I can say I am Christian, I am Hindu, I am Muslim, I am Buddhist, and yet I can say I am neither. I am a child of the universal Father and Him alone I worship ; but I revere and do obeisance to all the great Teachers of the world, the Founders of all religions, for they are our elder brothers who serve the self-same Father by ministering to earth's younger children according to their varying needs, or capacities. Everlasting progression is the order and principle of life."

The contradictions in the statements about the spirit-world were puzzling to me and I could not reconcile the various descriptions received from different spirits. On this point Mr. Bush wrote " Many communications from spirit side of life and also by spiritualist writers in the flesh appear to be contradictory. Sometimes they really are, but most frequently they are not. They only appear

to be so. It depends upon the point of view. A ten-storied house may seem as a palace to one brought up in a hut, a single room, but it would seem a despicable dwelling to a prince. A ball painted with different colours if viewed from one portion only would appear to be say red to one and blue to another, in the light to one and in the shadow to another. Intellectually and spiritually (e.g. to character) one never ceases to grow. The progress though variable at times in one's experience is continuous and external. But the body, the organised instrument through which and by which we manifest, has its limitations. It has its period of growth in the maturity, then in course of time it becomes worn out, unfitted for the larger man, and we have to change it. On the material plane, we call it death. On the spirit side of life the organised spirit body may undergo a gradual transmutation in its quality for it may cast off astral shells as some theosophists think. We cannot be dogmatic on that point but personally, I am inclined to think that a gradual refinement takes place in the texture or the substance of the spirit or etheric body (some people call it the soul – unfortunately people use words in such different senses,) and that there is no casting off as of the flesh body."

So you see there is no contradiction, only glorious, beautiful wonder and thanks and prayers to the wonderful Creator, Planner, and Sustainer of the Universe.

In some Spiritualistic books I found a statement that there was no sex in the spirit world. This was very puzzling to me, and in reply to my query on this point, he wrote "You say that in book—"How to speak with the Dead," the author says that in the spirit world there is no sex. Literally he is quite wrong. Without doubt sex does continue after death, and continues for aeons and aeons. But in the course of tremendous progression, as we approach divinity of character, I believe the sex differences merge and blend with one another, even as on this earth—Some of the lower animals are bisexual, and some of the flowers in the vegetable kingdom are bisexual. But again as far as I can ascertain, there is no procreation without a material body and so although sex characteristics continue for a long time they are mental and psychic differences and not for purposes of procreation. In the primordial universal spirit the father mother principle is one, and not two divided principles. But as the spirit reaches out for manifestation on other planes i, e, in other conditions, these principles do separate and manifest in different bodies suitable to each. Then when the spirit starts

on its way home, back to its original source, the different parts gradually merge again into one charged with experience of manifold life, but without losing identity. By way of illustration, take a ray of white light and pass it through a glass prism. It stretches out, separates out into seven colours of the spectrum (like the rainbow). Then if these seven coloured rays are again merged into one they become a ray of white light again and yet the seven colours are still in the white light.

There is also another illustration from physiology. The bipolar cell positive and negative separated into male and female cells(though the manifestation may be either male or female). In the spirit world this reunion when accomplished may be eternal."

The experiences in my seances were not always uniform. Sometimes I used to get poor results. Being worried over this difference in experience I wrote to him whereupon he replied—"you are not always in a fit condition to provide forces by which the spirit-friends can communicate. You may be tired, have lost the temper during the day on some irritating cause, also the spirit people may not always want or find it proper to communicate. They are not our slaves and if they find that you are inclined to overindulge in spirit commu-

nion, or are relying too much upon them, they will in their wisdom cease to use you. There must be moderation in this as in all other things. Sometimes when we have had much given to us to think of, they stop communicating for a time until these new ideas are digested and not only digested but assimilated and worked into our very life. It is not good, but it is bad to press for spirit communion if the conditions are not good, or if the spirit people do not wish to respond. If you do that you will be in danger of frivolous spirits or impersonating spirits taking control and annoying you. Moderate communication will benefit your health. Over indulgence may seriously injure it. Sometimes the presence of a stranger will disturb the conditions. But whatever the explanation this variation is good proof that the movements do not emanate from you".

The messages from my wife impressed upon me the supreme necessity of spreading this knowledge as the people were ignorant of it, although it vitally concerned them. To most of my visitors this knowledge was strange as a new revelation. When I communicated to Mr. Bush my eagerness to propagate what little I had learnt he wrote (it is not wise to force your views upon other people) the light will spread gradually and you will gather round you a company of earnest in-

quirers. Amongst them you will discover some with mediumistic powers and they will develop. These powers also should not be *forced*. Let them grow slowly. That is nature's way. Patience and perseverance above all things. You will find one who may be clairvoyant, another who is good at psychometry, another good with the table, another with automatic writing, another a trance-medium who will speak in trance or be controlled by a spirit. By and by you may discover a materialising medium. But this gift must be carefully used as it is so very exhausting and the medium must be cared for. Certainly, obtain advice from the spirit-friend as to the conditions to be observed and if it seems reasonable and sensible take it. But whenever you have a sitting for these material phenomena, take care that only reliable and good people are admitted to the seance".

The ignorance of the people led them to ridicule my efforts for the spread of this knowledge. It was but natural that they should do so on account of the novelty of the subject. In reply to these unpleasant experiences Mr. Bush wrote: "You will be ridiculed perhaps persecuted in various ways. Be discreet, be wise, trust in God, be faithful to trust and great shall be the blessing".

When I was rather going too fast with my experiment, he wired to me to cease holding seances for sometime. This was very painful to me as it denied the pleasure of talking with her. I could not understand the reason of the cablegram, but the following letter which I received later on explained his view point". You say 'this suspense is very tiresome. Let it not be so. Be quite resigned and happy to wait. It will be good spiritual exercise'. Then you say 'many are inquiring of you and want to see experiments.' 'How will the cause progress?' Let them wait. The cause is alright. It is in stronger and wiser hands than yours. What is a pause of a few months of your work in a movement which is to be the work of centuries? And if by waiting you can gain the strength and greater knowledge, will the pause not have been very worthwhile?

Psychic power which you and the operators on the the other side have to use is not like water in a great European city where you can go to a tap and turn it on whenever you like and draw as much as you like. It is not an unfailing well. It is limited in individuals and very fine conditions are required for satisfactory results. Your guides want you to conserve your psychic power that they may work upon you to develop certain other powers in you. You may possibly become

clairvoyant and also receive messages inspirationally in time. Also the medium with whom you sit needs a rest or you will both have trouble.

Your spirit-wife is ready for a great spiritual enlightenment. Her goodness is that of her virtues, but she has not progressed in spiritual knowledge. Perhaps, you think that because the communications come from the spirit world or your good wife, that you are receiving eternal truths the all highest light. Your wife holds nearly all the same ideas about her religion as she did when in the flesh, practising similar rites, living in a similar way, and worshiping the same Gods. She has moved physically, but not spiritually. This must take place.

The importance of this knowledge was impressed upon me by him in the following extract from his letter, which will show the readers that it is not simply the consolation that one seeks through spiritualism, but it has got some higher purpose. He wrote "Remember that the great purpose of the new spiritualistic movement—the incursion of spirit people into touch with earth-people again is not only to afford proof of the continuity of personality and life after death, not only to prove that these spirit human beings are here to comfort and

guide, but above all to open our minds to knowledge and our souls to righteousness and love. That in the prime purpose, I think your chief purpose is to come in contact with your dear wife again. That is quite natural. But it must not end there. It must not dwell too long on mere association with once beloved. You must both progress and in your case you cannot progress without occasional silence and separation. That is one of the reasons why sometimes you do not get any message. There are higher guides interfering. Seek not to impose your will on them. Many difficulties may intervene, many doubts come, some opposition, some disappointment and perplexities, fight them all. Hold fast to faith, even to the end and you will conquer, and arise stronger and better.

If people ask why don't you show us how you hold seances, answer them "I have my good private reasons. One day perhaps you may know."

Concerning the messages of her daily life in the spirit world and other religious observances, he once wrote to me: "So far the writings are very interesting and enlightening, especially as they reveal how many different conditions there are, how many different communities there are, how people take with them all their old thoughts, habits, customs, desires etc. etc. But what a sorry unprogressive life,

it would be, if in spirit—world there was just a repetition of the old earth ideas. Here we are much separated, and the world held back by the peoples being divided by different religions—christian, Muslim, Hindu, Budhist, etc. etc.—by different languages by different colours. In the higher spirit world all these must *blend* harmoniously like a chord of beautiful music or the many colours in a lovely fabric. It would be discordant if one note or one colour were to say "I am the most important, you must give way to me, you must become like me." The law of the Universe is 'unity in diversity.' We must seek for the best, purest, whitest in each, and blend them into one white light. Your dear wife is still *bound*, imprisoned in her old ideas. You are also much bound but you are much advanced in this respect than her, and can teach her somewhat. She may have the quality of unselfish love or purity or patience more developed than you, and in those respects she can teach and help you. In that way you can and must help each other.

Sometimes, I used to get poor results in my seances, which were very disappointing to me. I wanted to get as many messages as possible from different spirits. on this point Mr. Bush wrote." Remember that communication may not depend only upon you and your wife. There are spirit people who have charge of you and also of your

wife, and in their wisdom, or by the advice of the higher spirits they may be preventing or checking communication. My own opinion is that you were doing too much communication, and have exhausted your powers, and that you require rest for both mind and body. Also, this is frequently the case. You have had many new ideas about spirit life, and the spirit world given to you, and new thoughts about your own being, that is about the constitution of man, and they are breaking up your mode of thought, and undermining some of your old beliefs," Now you must halt, so that you can digest and assimilate new thought, just as you have been receiving in life very solid and nourishing food. It takes time to be absorbed, just as it is possible to over eat so it is possible to have too much new thought at one time. One can have mental indigestion. Patience and again patience and more reflection. Then you would be ready for more, and will receive more with profit and understanding. You have been favoured with intercourse with your wife not only for the sake of intercourse but for your enlightenment on things spiritual that you may in due course teach others. To hold seances only for the pleasure of speaking to your wife is to misunderstand the purpose of breaking through the veil that hides the spiritual from the material, and if you do not fully grasp this point, you will be prevented

from intercourse by higher powers or if you take the spirit world by force, if you burgle into it, you may do yourselves some serious harm. We must learn laws of the spirits and follow them.

On one occasion, he wrote of a strange experience which he had from my wife. He wrote "I had a curious experience on 20th march 1921 at about 6—30 in the evening, I felt a warm flow all over my back, one of the indications that your good wife was with me—and I asked mentally," Is that the lady Rishi?" Immediately my hand rapped on my knees three times signifying yes. I greeted her and carried on a short conversation mentally, she replying yes or no, by similar motions of my hands. I asked, have you communicated with your husband since the ban was removed and she replied yes. Now about that very hour the post-man brought your letter of the 9th to the house but I did not know it. I did not get that letter till 10-30 that night. She had evidently been following your letter."

In this letter dated 16-3-22 he wrote, 'You will note that she (Mrs. Robertson) has received the impression that your wife was desirous of talking with you again and that you might resume spirit communication in moderation. Well I had already written to you that you might with safety and pro-

fit do so again. Mrs. Robertson confirms my own impression. Strangely, I had also been feeling for several days this warm feeling, but I could not be sure who it was giving it to me. Now Mrs. Robertson says, it was your wife. When I received her letter I sent out a strong thought message to your wife, that I had removed the ban on your communion with the spirit and that she could now communicate. Perhaps she came to us to thank us for what we had done for her and you."

His letters were always replete with valuable information and he never failed to seize every opportunity of impressing the higher side of spiritualism. While explaining the meaning of the term "Spirit" he once wrote "In English the words spirit and soul are rather indiscriminately used (Like many other of our words, partly carelessly, partly ignorantly and partly because one school of thought uses a word one way and another school of thought uses the same word with a different meaning.) Some use "soul" to mean the ultimate essence or principle and spirit to mean the etheric body. Some use these words in exactly the reverse meaning. I think that most spiritulists use "Spirit" as the first principle and "soul" as the etheric body, Some also conceive of spirit as being formless. But when it takes organic form in man it is spoken of as spirit body or soul. I agree that they very vaguely use

it and the same ought to be more clearly defined. Spiritualists generally believe that each ego is part of the Universal spirit (Brahma) but never loses its identity. The experiences of each ego add to the experiences or manifestations of the Universal spirit. These are very interesting theories, but they cannot be proved. They may be apprehended by intuition, but as they are not demonstrated by proof we do not press our views upon others. Too much thought or speculation on these abstruse and very deep subjects is likely to turn men away from the practical affairs of his earthly life which is not altogether good or wise because the chief purpose of life on the physical plane is to get all experiences and lessons of his life. Our aim of this life is not how to kill and destroy desire and its various functions of the flesh body and the spirit body but how to control them all, and use them all, not for selfish indulgence but in the unselfish service of humanity."

In some of my wife's messages she had mentioned about punishment in the spirit world referring to which he wrote "According to tens of thousands statements from the spirit world, punishment does indeed take place in the spirit-world and also advancement. Unlike man God does not punish arbitrarily. All His punishments are at the same time remedial. The remedy is the

punishment and man can obliterate his misdeeds by service to man from the spirit world, by the working out of natural psychic and spiritual laws".

Regarding certain items in the daily life of my spirit-wife, he once expressed as follows :
 " With reference again to spirit people continuing their formal religious practises in the spirit-world that is no doubt a fact as you and I have discovered. How long will they continue to do them? Such practises may help us so long as there is no mental or spiritual progress. But when we do these things are we helping others? This is one test of their value. When we offer 1,000 sesamums to a god are we helping a fellow man in darkness, in pain, or sorrow or poverty? Some people in the flesh are difficult to be persuaded to change the trait of character we carry with us to spirit-life. But as soon as we really desire light and strive for it, it will come. If your spirit wife could sincerely pray " Show me O Father, the truth even if it means that I must give up beliefs that are dear to me " the teacher would come to show her the way.

The higher teaching of spiritualism indicates that all beings had their origin or birth on this or other of the millions of the inhabited worlds (planets and stars) in space and the highest Lord,

God or chief was a man—an earth—man once and that he rose by merit to become a ruler to do the will of the all God, the universal spirit. He is not to be worshipped. He may be revered, he may be accepted as a leader or as our master but only *voluntarily* on our part not by compulsion, a good god i.e., not a self appointed god, not one who has forced himself into a position of power, but a great chief or God or Lord appointed by higher powers, will never ask for, nor desire worship. He holds his position only as a *servant* of the Great-spirit in order himself to serve man and to rise higher. No one who gets angry, no one who works for his own glory, no one who demands worship for himself is a real god, nor a good god. The first qualification for Lordship or godship is unselfishness and love. There are plenty of ambitious self seeking spirit-people of considerable power and ability who pose as gods, who demand service and worship. They also pose as other recognised chiefs and take their names. Those are false gods, and when their worshippers here die they gather the poor deluded people to them and try to hold high court in Heaven, all for their self glorification and vanity. And so we find good people still offering their useless sesamum, still doing senseless perambulations, still performing propitious

worship and so never making spiritual progression. When I say never, I only mean for a long time. I hope, I am not hurting your feelings. I have put away old errors and have learnt these things (which I believe are true) from the higher spirit-world.

Most people not being very spiritually advanced, when they become believers in spirit intercourse, *can only get into contact with spirit people of their own degree and kind.* These are nearest to the earth conditions and so can most easily come. But how can they teach us transcendental questions? What do they *know* of higher conditions, of the higher and higher spirits, and the higher and higher heavens? Nothing or very little. They can tell you of their present life, they can prove to you that they are very much alive. They do prove that they are exactly the same as they were, more that they still love, etc., and *all that is very useful and very important.* But we must not stop there. We and they must get on, must develop, and progress. That is one of the greater teachings of spiritualism. You will note how wonderful and uplifting this movement is and you will now more clearly understand why I so often urge you not to be content only with the pleasure of reunion with the departed ones. Go on friend, enlarge your outlook, be very cour-

ageous, very aspiring, very desirous of light and more light. Pray for a higher teacher to come to you and one will come. Take your wife with you in this urge of the soul and may the all loving Father bless your efforts."

CHAPTER IV

Evidential messages.

How these messages were obtained.

The readers will necessarily want to know the evidence supporting the propositions sought to be proved in this volume. In particular, it is necessary to discuss the facts which go to prove the continuity of life of the individual after whom the book is named. The proof regarding one individual should ordinarily be sufficient to generalise the principle for all persons. It is commonly supposed that there is no sufficient evidence for the principles of spiritualism and most of the writings are based on hearsay evidence or insufficient data. Those who want to have first hand information on these points must be prepared to diligently devote their time and energy for the study of this knowledge. If they have not got the necessary patience and perseverance the only alternative to rely on the testimony of those who have taken the trouble of exploring that neglected region. The truth of this science cannot be easily demonstrated. The phenomena cannot be controlled or commanded. It

may be possible with the advance of knowledge to find out easier methods of communication. But under the present circumstances we have to rely upon those that are available to us for obtaining the necessary evidence. Since my initiation into this knowledge, I have unceasingly tried to obtain all possible proofs, and have communicated times without number, with my wife in the spirit world. So also, I have the privilege of talking with several known and unknown spirits. I have witnessed many of the higher phenomena of spiritualism and hence feel no hesitation in proclaiming this truth before the world. The strength of this science depends upon the testimony of many illustrious persons but as the chain of experiences increases by each link, I think it my duty to collect my observations in the matter. It is a very delicate task to expose such messages before the people for public scrutiny but for the interests of truth, I think it my duty to analyse them, unmindful of the ridicule of biased critics.

Every man has a legitimate desire to know the evidence supporting the survival of any particular individual and hence many will find this chapter especially interesting and instructive. Attempts are often made to explain such messages by Telepathy, subconscious-self or unconscious cerebration of some person. A few attribute the whole pheno-

mena to conscious or unconsoious fraud. I should state here that most of my experiences are through automatic writing and table-tilting. It is on the strength of these experiences that I feel confident about the continual visit of my wife. But they extend over the higher phenomena of spiritualism such as Trance, Direct-voice, clairvoyance, Spirit-photography and Spirit-touch. Other mediums have received messages from her in my absence, which go to prove her existence and identity. The automatic writing which I continually try is not through my mediumship, as unfourtanately I do not possess the faculty to any appreciable extent. The following extracts from a mass of experiences show her interest in me and her earnest desire to propagate this knowledge.

The readers can judge whether the following extracts from her voluminous messages can be explained by any other theory. Any one can easily see that it is improbable that they might have come by telepathy or subliminal self. Evidence will cease to have any weight, if such detailed and consistent messages are found insufficient to prove human survival and identity of an individual. To me her existence and continual visits are so real and convincing that her vision to my physical sight is the only link lacking in the chain of proofs for her survival. She has proved her existence

according to all laws of the next world. I have been getting such experiences almost every day. She accompanies me in my travels for this cause and helps me in my efforts. Her touch is intermittent and hence she is unaware of events that occur in her absence and cannot say anything about them. This by itself should be sufficient to refute the allegation of subliminal self or telepathy. The messages have been copied almost verbatim and one need not be disappointed if he does not find in them the elegance of style, the fancy of a poet or the reasoning of a philosopher.

It may be argued that as most of the messages have come through the Ouija-board and as I often join with the medium in that process, they can very well be said to have emanated through my own subliminal self. This argument though plausible at first sight, can easily be refuted by close scrutiny. The messages do not come as I like, although I know all the facts about her. In fact, no results are produced without the co-operation of my spirit-wife. It is necessary also to have proper conditions. Several matters proving her identity are known to me and yet often there are mistakes in her replies. Had the whole process been due to my volition, it should have continued as long as I liked. But the experience is quiet

the other way. It would be a perversion of facts to attribute these messages to telepathy also. Several times, I have known the contents of the message after they had been copied out. The medium who cooperates with me knows almost very little of her life before death, and is not given any suggestions before or during the experiments. Sometimes the flow of the messages begins without any question on our part and on some occasions we are asked by her to put questions when she has nothing to say of her own accord. The whole process is amusing and mysterious, and may seem incredible to those who have not made a close study of the subject. The world treats the theorist with far greater hospitality than it does the demonstrator. More credence is given to the statements of a theorist than to those of thousands of honest psychics *who* have proclaimed a personal demonstration of the continuity of individual life.

The messages from the other world are usually recieved through automatic writing as it is the easiest mode of communication. The Medium's hand is controlled by the communicating spirit who manipulates his psychic power. Sometimes the Medium's brain is first impressed with the message which is subsequently transmitted through his nervous and muscular system. The passivity of the medium is highly

desireable for getting untainted and accurate communications.

The usual objection against Automatic writing is the theory about the subliminal self of the medium. A critic is found often to say, "How is the message to be considered genuine". The method of communication and its contents are the chief determining factors in this case. The sincerity of the medium must be above suspicion. Granted these things, there should be no reason for doubting the genuineness of a message, if it be satisfactory in other respects.

In my seances, I often get messages from Subhadrabai, my late wife, who is my most frequent communicator. Although, I have several other near relations in the next world, they are not so eager to communicate as she is, and, in spite of my earnestness to talk to them, or rather their spirits, I rarely obtain any communication from them.

The information verifiable as well as unverifiable, is so unexpected that it seems very unreasonable to disbelieve her identity. I cannot control or command her to do a certain thing. She comes as it suits her in accordance with the laws of the other world. It is very delicate to deal with her messages, as they are quite personal

and would serve no purpose but tickling the fancy of a critic. I often feel tempted to publish them for scientific inquiry but again it occurs to me that the world is not yet prepared to consider seriously this knowledge—still I can assure those who are not hostile to this new revelation that her messages are very convincing and leave no doubt regarding her identity.

There is a striking peculiarity with regard to her communications. Sometimes she fails to give accurate replies about matters which I and other medium very well know. If the messages had emanated from our subliminal self, there would have been no such mistakes which are due to some other causes. Her touch with this world being intermittent, she seems to be unaware of things which happen during her absence.

The unverifiable matter regarding her existence in the spirit world is so much beyond our comprehension that it can never be attributed to the submerged strata of our mind. Facts like these irrefutably disprove this objection. I have referred to her messages because they are more numerous than those from others which I have in my observation. There are several others which are not less convincing, Gravity and not humour should guide us in solving this problem of transcendental importance.

References to incidents of this world.

"Do you remember the letters which I used to send to you from the Bunglow?"

"I greatly insisted upon performing the operation."

"Now I am not required to stay alone, as I used to, while living in the Bunglow."

"I used to tell you to show my letters to the world."

"When we were in Bombay, I used to perform various sorts of sweets, and used to go out for long walks."

"You did not always mind my wishes?"

"Why were you bringing friends with you at night?"

"I gave you money while living."

"My marriage took place in my father's house,"

"We were staying at Allahabad for three or four weeks."

"I was tired of my life."

"My life was not like those of other women. I was unfortunate, I do not want to explain this."

"The room in which we were staying at Miraj had no door to it."

"I once fainted on a cot in the hospital."

"My operation was performed on Saturday."

"While going to the operation room I asked you 'Shall I be alright?'"

"I was under treatment in two hospitals for the disease."

"In my trunk there are three blouses, a square wooden box, a rubber tube, and two books of songs. There is a round box also and a photo of my female friend,"

"I rarely got opportunities of meeting you alone as you were often accompanied by men."

"Generally, I did not wear any ornaments and so was not afraid of staying alone."

"I did not take food by day. I used to live on fruits, keep milk-pot near the bed and dressed the hair in the evening."

"I was ill for about six years and wished to get operated."

"I was tired of my life at the time of the delivery."

"I had gone for a bath in Ganges at Allahabad."

"While at Miraj (place of Death) I had not decided whether to live or die."

"I used to keep my things in this cupboard and many of them are still there."

"I insisted upon the operation as many persons suffering from such diseases are cured in that way."

"We were happy at Allahabad."

"Some times, I used to send you un-pleasant letters."

"We used to sit in the evening at the tank at Miraj."

"I was not afraid of anything."

"I disliked modern education and did not wish to talk with others."

"Many disliked me at the time of marriage."

"I could wear two sarees at one time."

"My stomach was diseased. X-ray photographs were taken at Bombay and Miraj."

"I was very excitable and could not bear insults of others."

"Do you remember the couplets that I told you?"

"I slept once near the well in the Gutakeshwar temple."

"Do you remember the sweet-balls which I prepared at Miraj? One of them was in my trunk for some years. How long was it there?"

"I used to pass my time in religious observances. Some persons opposed me for this."

"My mother-in-law lived only for a few years after the marriage."

"None of my old things is now available. They have been thrown off by others."

"My temper was very resolute. It is so even now."

"I used to vomit every day."

Some consoling Messages.

"I am troubled by your grief. Vain sorrow is injurious to both of us."

"The operation has relieved me of the pain. I am now happy, and so you too. Why are you sorry now? Please tell me."

"My only desire is that you should use everything that belonged to me. I have no objection for it. Whatever you will do for me will please me and my desire will be fulfilled,"

"I know your sincerity. It is true that you feel very much for me and do not wish to talk with anybody else, I wish that your fame should spread. Why do you grieve? You will feel more sorrow, if you see me or hear my voice."

"I am much pained by your tears. Why do you do like that on every occasion? Would you like to trouble me? I was much troubled because you were sad for four days. Hence, I did not come. Why are you dejected? I did not meet you last night because you were sad. Do not feel sorry. How often should I tell you."

I am the cause of your dislike of all things. Why do you do like that? How often have I told you not to be sad or disheartened. I would not feel happy if you do like that. I thank you for your forbearance.

"I felt no pain at the time of death. My end was certain. It was not due to the operation. It was inevitable. I help you in every way. I am in no way troubled by your invocations. I also wish to communicate with you. I am troubled by talks on past events."

I am sorry for my conduct in the hospital. You may say what you like, but how can I help expressing my thoughts. I realized your sincere love when you promised double fee to the doctor. You were to get this knowledge through me, You promised to leave your melancholy but do not act accordingly. You did not pay any attention to my virtues."

" At Miraj, I became unconscious, at 8 A. M. I expired at 4 P. M. When the doctor came at the last moment, I was suffering from the trouble. I am in no way sorry for your inability to properly arrange my funeral ceremony. Two angels met me in the hospital room and guided me to the " Satya Loka" ! "

" Undoubtedly, I like this subject and I was instrumental in creating a test for you. It is my duty to help you in every way. You cannot realize that women like me who had to leave this World in the middle age, before their time, are bound to feel interested in the World that they left so suddenly. But don't think that we want to return. No, not at all. I told you only with a view to impress upon you our present condition. I am delighted when I find you free from care, peaceful and talking merrily with others. On the contrary, I am restless when you are sad and disturbed. Then our attention is greatly drawn towards you and cannot be fixed upon the affairs of our world. Naturally this leads to many errors causing the displeasure of the Guru. It greatly pains my heart. So always request you to be peaceful and happy, as it will make me nappy and avoid the displeasure of the Guru. I see you in distress continuously for three days. That greatly

afflicts me. Now my only request is not to be sorry or sad. May I go now ? ”

“ I feel very happy when I see you free from worry. I have no pain when you are happy. You know my nature. Sometimes, I also remember incidents, which make me very dejected. Then I get up and go to Sri Krishna for prayer. This immediately satisfies me. ”

“ How often have I told you that I am troubled when you are in sorrow. Several times my attention is drawn towards you leading to errors in my work. Sometimes, I cannot mind my Japa or any other work. I am very unhappy simply by your sorrow. Do not forget this. I knew that you would have this trouble. You will succeed in this work. Do not be afraid. I feel very uneasy when I see you in worry. Leave it off. It is no use worrying. I know that we cannot help worrying, but mind my advice, do not be anxious. ”

“ Last night, I was quietly meditating when all of a sudden my rosary of beads stopped. I opened my eyes and found a change in me. I tried to know the reason thereof, but could not find any. Then, I thought that there must be something wrong with you. Straight, I came here and stood watching the whole scene. I stayed here the whole night and hence you could not get sleep,

otherwise your mentality would have enabled you to do so. I stopped here leaving all work. I was here the whole night."

"What shall I say, I am greatly agitated. There is none who sincerely loves you. Sometimes I thought over the matter for nights together to solve this mystery but I could not find any solution thereof. We are unlucky, how can it be helped? I am, of course, ready to help you but I cannot do all things. I am required to obtain permission for every thing. I do not know for which work I should seek permission. Several times, I wished to do something but cannot get permission; and when the time is not ripe I get it. You cannot realise the difficulties in my way. There are so many things which I wish to do at once but I am too weak for that. We are troubled in doing certain things. We do not mind it, but meanwhile our Guru (Governor) prevents us from doing it. We deem it proper to listen to his wishes. We do not feel much troubled in carrying out a work that would require only a short time in the Mrityu—Loka (physical plane). Another consideration in this respect is that the time is not fit whenever we wish to do a certain work. We are all depending upon the right time. Really speaking we possess very

little power to carry out your wishes, so we are not masters of ourselves.

We can do anything in the next world but such is not the case regarding the physical world. You will say 'several such things can take place and have taken place. Very many spirits trouble the people—whence do they get that power.' But they do nothing but trouble the people. Their stay is very near the earth. They cannot rise to higher planes like us, and are punished for the troubles that they give to the people. There is no harm in simply visiting you because we come with permission. Some do come without it, but I do not like it.

CHAPTER V

Some other experiences—Talks in Dream.

In sleep, we are in the same state of existance as the spirits. Some times, we meet and converse with them in that state but cannot carry back the impressions after woking up. Those who remember them often regard them as the product of their own imagination or an overloaded stomach. At times, they are due to such physical causes, but occasionally, we get into touch with those whom we love on the other side. It is difficult to distinguish between the different classes of such impressions without resorting to some other mode of communication for verification. A spiritualist seance provides such means and has been tried by the writer on several occasions

The writer often has the pleasure of meeting his dear wife in the spirit world, but cannot remember anything during his waking state owing to the inability of his brain to recollect those impressions. He often asks her about such nocturnal meetings and gets illuminating messages which are given below :

"Yesterday I was with you from 1 A. M. to 3-30 A.M. You were talking with me for an hour. You did not answer all my questions, but spoke about some ornaments".

"I was sleeping on the third story of the house when you came and called me. I got up and followed you. You know your nature. It is not necessary for me to tell. Then, I went at half past four".

"I had come at half past twelve. You slept for two hours and then commenced talking on private matters which I very much disliked. Being annoyed, when I started to go, you pulled me and changed topic".

"Day before yesterday I had come. Our talk on that occasion made us both shed tears".

"Generally, I do not seek permission to meeting at night, because it leads to many errors. For instance, suppose I come to-day, meet you and return immediately, then there is no harm; but next day at the same time I am tempted to come again and see you. But how can I come without permission? By the time, I go and obtain permission the time for work approaches. Well, if I come leaving the work then I feel trouble which I can't bear. So I do not like this. I first get the permission and then come for an hour or

fifteen minutes without any fear. Some time I am inclined to come even neglecting the work. But I feel tired to do the remaining task. I don't like to trouble the Guru by frequent solicitations for permission. I seek it for only meeting you at night only twice in a week, and do come accordingly. Don't think that I do not come. You see, I had come on Friday at 2 A. M. How shall I describe the talk on that occasion? I can never forget it, I sat for half an hour and spoke with you on different subjects. Mr. Oak (another spirit had accompanied me, but did not stay for more than five minutes. I don't know why he suddenly got up and started. Then we were freely talking and laughing. You seemed quite happy and did everything as you like. I plainly tell you that I am fully helping you in your work. I would never feel to do so. I am troubled because you do not leave your worry".

Clairvoyant Sitzings, In Paris and London.

My visit to Europe, in 1923 in connection with the International Spiritualist Congress enabled me to witness the higher phenomena of spiritualism. Several mediums were present on the occasion and I availed myself of their mediumistic faculty. In

Paris, I visited three Clairvoyant mediums who uniformly told me that there was a female spirit with me and gave a fairly accurate description of her features. One of the mediums, madame Lucilla stated, that the spirit was showing some letters which she could not read being unacquainted with the language. I had a book bearing printed letters of my wife's name which I showed to the medium and inquired whether they bore any analogy to what she saw. She was delighted to see the printed letters and joyfully assured me that they were just as on the book. Possibly my wife might have projected these letters before the medium. It may be added here that I did not tell any of these mediums that I had lost my wife and that I wanted to communicate with her.

The experiences in London were not so satisfactory, possibly because my stay there was very short and no special seances were held for me. At the suggestion of Mr. Bush I attended a meeting in the London spiritualist alliance where Mr. Vout Peters was going to give a demonstration of clairvoyance.

After describing some other spirits, he told about me that there was male spirit standing near me and had a white dress. As far as, I could see there was no probability of any such spirit being present with me on the occasion and I thought that

Mr. Peters might have failed to see the spirit accurately. In my private seances I inquired of my spirit-wife, who said that she herself was there, but the medium erred in describing the features. I might have possibly got better results with him on other occasions, as he is reputed to be one of the best mediums in England.

In my second visit to London in 1928, she was seen by several clairvoyant's and was rightly described. Among others, I may mention the name of Miss Francis who in the British college of psychic Science stated on 21-8-28 that she could see a lady who was a little taller than Mrs. Rishi, seems to have suffered from long illness and looks to be between twenty-five and thirty. All these facts were true and not known to the medium. In other seances with the medium, we were several times told about her presence and her fuller description was given.

Direct Voice Seances.

There is a rare form of mediumship by which the voice of the spirits can be heard independently of the medium. He only lends his power to the invisible being who manipulates the whole phenomena. Such mediums are very rare. Mr. Denis Bradley states that there are about a dozen known

mediums in the entire world, who seem to have this power. The medium conscious in the seance and does not forget his individuality as in the trance-condition. These seances are usually held in darkness as it facilitates the production of the voice. The whole process is as yet mysterious but its genuineness has been several times tested and cannot be questioned. It had the pleasure of attending such a seance in the British College of Psychic Science in London. Mr. Mackenzie, the Principal of the college arranged it one Friday evening during my stay in London. I went to the seance room with about six or seven English ladies and gentlemen. Mrs. Blanche Cooper the medium and the sitters formed a circle holding hands in complete darkness. After a few minutes music the mediums guide in the spirit world began to speak and I was the first person whom he addressed by direct voice. Although, I was given preliminary instruction about the seance, I felt a little puzzled by it. The guide said. "There is an Indian spirit here. She is standing near you. She says that she is happy and will speak with you in your language". This was a pretty clear voice and I was naturally pleased to know that my spirit-wife was willing to talk with me by direct voice method. When I began to ask in Marathi which is my mother tongue, and got replies in a very low voice.



I was asking her to speak more loudly when the guide intervened and said, "She is gone". That was rather disappointing to me, but I could not help it. Other sitters, then got into touch with their friends and relatives on the other side and their voices were much more audible.

In my private seance, I tried to ascertain the facts from her, when she stated that she was present there and tried to speak loudly but could not do so as she was not used to it. All the same there was evidence to show that the voice proceeded from her..

During the seance, I was told that she wanted to touch me. On my assenting to it, I distinctly felt a touch on my leg. A sitter on my right was given rose by her spirit-friend. As I was holding her hand, I also got the rose flower in my hand.

The whole seance lasted for about an hour. When the lights were switched on, I found that two out of the three trumpets that were standing at the commencement of the seance had fallen down and some of the roses brought by the sitters were scattered on the floor. The seance was much successful and but for my hurried departure from England, I would have availed myself of further talks with my wife. The trumpets, used in such seances are made either of aluminium or any other light metal.

Sometimes they are prepared of card board also. They are used for magnifying the spirit-voice and serve the purpose of a megaphone. The spirits sometimes raise it as high as the ceiling of the room and can be seen floating if it is made of phosphorescent substance.

During our visit to London in 1928, at the International Spiritualists Congress, I had further opportunities of attending direct voice seances at the family circle, at Mrs. Robertson. In both of these seances, which I attended with Mrs. Rishi, the guide of the circle spoke through the trumpet and we could hear the voice on both the occasions. Several times the trumpet used to float in the air and cheerily patted us. The presence of Subhadrabai was also indicated by the Guide but as on previous occasions she could not bring forth the voice through the trumpet for want of sufficient practice. The luminous spot on the trumpet enabled us to follow its movements in the pitchy darkness in which the seances were held. The circle used to consist of Mr. & Mrs. Robertson and two more friends of the family. The spirit often used to advise them to pray and use the Musical Box for gaining sufficient power.

Attempt For Photography.

I had a busy time in London and was hunting for all sorts of spiritualistic phenomena. My friend Mr. Bush was there to help me and a seance for photography was arranged with Mrs. Deane, the well-known photographic medium in the Stead Bureau. Mrs. Robert and Mr. H. N. Chaturvedi were also present for the seance. It was a very pleasant affair, as two of them were in some way in touch with my spirit-wife and wished to have her photograph by the psychic power of the medium.

After the preliminaries were arranged, four plates were magnetised by holding them in our hands for about ten minutes. During this period, we were praying and wishing that the spirit should help us in our attempt. After the magnetisation, the camera was focussed once upon me and Mrs. Robertson together and again upon all of us. Two plates were exposed each time, so that we had four plates to be developed. The focussing of the camera and the insertion of plates Etc., were done by Mrs. Deane the medium. The plates were exposed for about ten minutes, a rather unusually long time, particularly because the photographs were taken by day in ordinary light.

Two out of the four plates were found to have extras besides the sitters. I anticipated that it might

be of my spirit-wife, but I was not fortunate enough to have my wish fulfilled. The same spirit face appeared on two plates and could not be recognised by any of the sitters. Later on, I was told that it was recognised by Mrs. Robertson as that of her uncle. How he managed to impress upon the plates is a mystery ; as we never expected that he should come on the occasion.

As usual in private seances, my spirit-wife explained that she could not impress her image upon the negatives although she tried it so much. The spirits as well as the medium require development for such higher phenomena. I may add here that the whole experiment was clean and aboveboard, and the development was also done in our presence in the dark room. The plates were brand new and there was no unfair dealing in the whole process.

In my second visit to London, I had the pleasure of sitting with Mr. Hope and Mrs. Buxton who had come there for the spiritualistic Congress. They are well-known photographic mediums and often get very good results. The seance was arranged by Mr. Meyer, the Vice-President of the International Spiritualistic Federation. We went to the Stead Bureau along with him and were pleased to find the "extra" of Subhadrabai appearing in the photograph.



2. Spirit photograph of Subhadrabai obtained
in a seance in London.

The circumstances under which the photograph was obtained are rather interesting. The same morning, Subhadrabai had promised through automatic writing that she would try to give the photograph at the seance, and it seems that she could succeed in keeping her promise. It may be added that we had not intimated Mr. Hope about the passing over of Subhadrabai nor had I any talk with him about any particular spirit. We are considered very lucky in getting a recognizable face of a spirit known to us, in as much, as several times unknown faces appear on the plate. Mr. Meyer, in spite of his earnestness had not the good fortune of getting any appreciable results.

Another seance for photography was held with Mrs. Deane at the suggestion of Mr. Bajaj and Mr. Thakurprasad M.A. who were staying with us in London. Two plates were exposed on the occasion, out of which one was found to contain an "Extra" face of a lady known to Mr. Thakurprasad. She was his near relative and had passed over nearly 11 years ago. The experiment was closely observed by the circle from the beginning to the end and I have no hesitation in saying that there was no possibility of any fraud.

It is desirable to describe here the *Modus operandi* of spirit—photography for the infor-

mation of those who are unacquainted with the process of obtaining supernormal pictures. The medium takes the photograph of a group of persons and the faces of some of their departed friends or relatives are seen along with them on the plate. Several times unrecognized faces also appear and it is not fully known how the spirits manage to impress their faces in such a group of sitters. In fact, the percentage of unrecognized "Extras" is greater than that of the recognized ones. The spirits are not visible on that occasion and neither the medium nor the sitters can say anything about the results until the plate is developed. The photographs of ultra violet rays which cannot be seen by the naked eye explain the point and prove that it is not necessary for an object to be visible before photographing it. The magnetization of plates before inserting them in the Camera makes them sensitive and capable of recording the Psychic pictures.

Spirit photography is not quite recent as some are led to think. It originated in 1861, when Mumler obtained "Extras" while experimenting in his studio. It was a puzzle to him and he thought there might be some flaw, either in exposing the plates or in their development in the dark-room. He found after careful investigation that there was nothing wrong in the

process and the results that he obtained were due to some invisible entity who was trying to impress itself upon the plate. He subjected his powers to the careful observation of the experts who testified to the genuineness of the phenomena. Since then various mediums possessing the necessary power have been getting similar results demonstrating the truth of this branch of Psychic Research. It is very unfortunate that such mediums are very rare and those who have got the gift cannot be at the service of every individual.

5.—Trance Experiments.

Invisible beings sometimes can take control of the body of the Medium and use it, as a vehicle for expressing their words. Vocal chords of the medium's body are used by the spirits, who can thereby give vent to their thoughts. The medium during this state is completely unconscious and cannot remember anything that happens during these experiments. This differs from instances of "possession" in which the spirit takes involuntary control of the sensitive and stays there as long as it chooses to do so. In a trance the medium allows the body to be used for a time, by the invisible entity. The sleep

is not produced by hypnotic or mesmeric passes. As a result of the prayer and the co-operation of the spirit, the medium peacefully goes into a state of unconsciousness and gives out the thoughts of the spirit that may be present at the time. The spirit also requires, some practice to use the medium's body and cannot speak out on the first occasion.

During our course of lessons, in the British College of Psychic Science, in London, Mrs. Rishi could develop her faculty of trance mediumship and now she is able to be a good medium for this phase also. The usual control is a spirit unknown to us, but seems to have undertaken the mission of helping us. He speaks in English, although Mrs. Rishi is ignorant of that language. Subhadrabai did, so far attempt to speak as the control has been doing, but she has not yet succeeded in bringing forth her voice. The seances are attended by Dr. Ezekiel and some other sincere inquirers. After the usual prayer, lasting for about 15 minutes, the state of Catalytic trance follows and all her limbs are completely stiff instantly. She remains in that position for full one hour and there is a difference, in the beating of the pulse as well as the breathing. During the seances the pulse rises to about 92 while normally, it is nearly 70. When the experiment is about to end

deep-breathing follows and she resumes her normal consciousness. The control (spirit) is several times asked about the presence of other spirits and he replies to those questions and gives their messages, if there be any. Subhadrabai is almost invariably present at these seances but does not give any message as she finds it easier to convey her ideas through automatic-writing.

CHAPTER VI.

Conditions in the other world.

The ignorance regarding life after-death is the chief cause of the general belief that conditions similar to those on earth are not to be found in the other world. It is commonly supposed as stated by the great poet Kalidas in his "Vikram-orvashiyam" that there is nothing "to eat and drink in heaven and its denizens lie in a sort of sleepy hollow." Spiritualism has thrown much light on this issue and proved that life after death is a sort of counterpart of our physical existence.

In order to understand the description of the spirit-world, as given by the spirits, it would be necessary to know the exact meaning of the term "Spirit." It is not the Atma (soul) of the Hindus, which is vague and indescribable, without any form or limbs. In spiritualistic terminology a spirit means and connotes an etheric bodied individual, having the same ideas and tendencies and retaining his individual characteristics. That etheric body is an exact double of his physical

sheath with all his limbs and features. It is for this reason that a genuine spirit photograph resembles the one taken during the life-time and can be unmistakably recognized. It is not a photograph of the soul of that individual but of his etheric body which to him is as real and substantial as the physical is to us. This is the uniform statement of all spirits in different lands. The accounts about the other world are evidently unverifiable but can be regarded as credible for several reasons. The identity of the spirit is clearly proved before asking him the description regarding the next world. Several times, it is quite unexpected and inconsistent with our present-day notions. It is uniform in outstanding features though necessarily differing in minor details. It cannot be said that the spirits are truthful about verifiable matters and incredible when describing the conditions in which they live. For instance, if Raymond, the famous son of Sir Oliver Lodge or my wife Subhadrabai were to state certain things about the next world which may seem fanciful to many I do not see any reason why such a description should be regarded as unreliable, simply because it does not suit with our present ideas about heaven and hell. We must take the facts as they are—and not discard them only because they are new and unintelligible to us. Those who doubt such information, do not know that the

Western Spiritualists have proved that there are many things in the spirit world that resemble our earth conditions and things like schools, books, or laboratories also exist in that unknown land. It should be remembered that everything in that region is etheric i. e. composed of a fine form of matter which to us may be vapoury or shadowy but to them, it is as substantial and solid as the earth is to us. The food that they take or the clothes that they put on, are also not prepared out of the physical atoms but from the very element of which their bodies are composed. There is no wonder then that the spirit sometimes states about his food and clothes and several other things, which to us seem unnecessary for them.

The important point is to know whether the information is credible and genuine, and not whether it suits our present ideas. Before believing in the testimony of the spirit, test by all means his existence and identity but do not ridicule the knowledge which in near future is sure to revolutionise all our present ideas. Read the vast literature on this subject which has been assiduously prepared by the seekers after truth and all doubts will vanish in no time. "There are many things in heaven" says Shaksphere "which are not dreamt of in your philosophy."

It is the uniform statement of all spirits that death is painless, meaning thereby that the process of death, is like going to sleep. He is just the same man five minutes after death as he was before; and all the individual characteristics along with his thoughts, love and memory remain unchanged. The cloud of illness disappears and the individual feels a sort of relief by the change. A spirit once said "we feel the change as a serpent might feel when he has left the slough." The discarnate individual can see his friends and relations in flesh and is greatly pained to see them mourning for him. He tries to prove his existence in various ways to earthly beings, by keeping the astral arm on their shoulders and tries to console them, but within a short time, he realises the futility of his attempts as the touch of his astral arms cannot be perceived by the physical body. He sees his new body standing or floating at the spot he might have died. His astral body has got all the limbs of the physical one and the defects if there be any no longer continue to be in him. A lame or a blind man would not have the deformity under which he was labouring during his physical existence. Similarly, if a man is wounded by a weapon or blown by a cannon-ball it would have no effect on his astral body. Death is nothing but the separation of the etheric body from the physical one, which is decomposed after

death when vital elements have passed away from it. After this change, the individual gets varied experiences according to his actions here on earth. While trying to console his mourning relatives, he has also to adapt his mind to the new surroundings. Several times, the dying experiences have been recorded in my presence, some of which are very instructive and interesting. They throw much light upon the mystery of death and enable us to know the feelings of the individuals.

On one occasion, a spirit stated "I was ill for two months. Then in the last week, I had some indescribable beautiful dreams. At that time, they were very fearful to me, but they now seem pleasant, as I have understood their import. On that occasion I saw men, angels, and temples in the next world. Some of the angels were very charming, while others seemed frightening. I was very much afraid of them, as they were terrific to look at and used to frighten me, and beckon me to go to them. When I cried, they used to burst in laughter and cry aloud. At that time I used to wake up through fear, but could not utter a word. I have not as yet understood the reason there-of.

"For some days, I had dreams which stopped later on. At times, I used to hear at night, a low melodious voice of some one, who was, as it were talking with me. The only words in that voice

were," Now we shall meet." I wonderd, who was talking. But how could I know it? I was hearing the voice till the last moment. At last my stay in this world remained only for two days. I can say this now for certain, but I did not know it then. On the last morning when I was sitting after all my usual work I had a vision and some said, "Yes finished—." These were the only two words. In the evening I was lying quietly, when I became restless, and asked for milk from mother. I drank it and was lying with closed eyes. Many persons were sitting near me. I saw a garden and two men. At that time, they looked like human beings, but now I understood that they were the messengers. They did not seem fearful to me. One of them said. "What, how much more time now?" I was in swoon. The other said, "Is it the same person? Else, you will be deceived." He replied, "no, no, he is the same man." I cried again when they raised both of their hands. I do not know what happened after that. After a few hours, I found myself in a fearful place. I was even afraid of looking at it. I closed my eyes and did not know what happened after that, and through what places I was carried."

Another spirit communicated "I could see angels at the time of death. They looked like human beings and asked me to accompany them

to the "Tapoloka". It took me five hours to reach that place. I passed along several images of Gods, in my way and could see also some persons like myself. I had to cross a river which was very beautiful to look at. I had to undergo much trouble in crossing it. All persons going to the "Tapoloka" are required to go through it."

Messages like these are recieved regarding the experiences of an individual at the moment of his entry into the spirit world. They throw much light upon the feelings of the individuals at the beginning of the transition. Sometimes they visit their friends and relatives at a distance who are quite struck by such visions. Numerous cases of such visions have been recorded by careful investigators and they go to show the veridity of the phenomena. Students of this knowledge can find them, recorded in the annals of the Psychic Research Society or in the books of learned men like Camille Flammarion. It seems that the individual can at this moment easily materialise his etheric body on account of his ardent desire to communicate with his relations. They cannot manage to do so later on, as we find during the observations in the seances. It is uniformly stated that the individual has to stay in one of the planes of the next world and it is important to note

that the number is usually stated to be seven¹ all over the world.

It is difficult to give the location of these planes ; but they have been stated to be concentric circles surrounding our Globe. The spirituality of the individual determines his stay in the higher planes and the spirits assert, they can visit the higher or lower planes, if necessary, although they are not allowed to stay in them. Several times, the distance of their planes from our world is given by the denizens of those regions, according to their knowledge, but it seems that it cannot be stated according to our earth measures. After his entry in the other world, the individual has to suffer in some way or other, for his actions while on earth. The punishment is very severe and very certain, as averred by those who had to undergo that ordeal. It seems that the law works automatically and there is no judge or jury to try them. A villain and a saint, cannot stay together in those regions, and are allotted different places. If things were to be otherwise, there could be no justice in God's Creation and there would be a perversion of His Power. It is confirmed by the messages received from the other world that justice and truth are not meant for this world alone but also have their sway in the spirit-world. The punishment is inflicted for the reformation of the individual, but

it is not eternal. The condemned souls can improve by the advice of the higher ones, who take delight in disinterestedly working for the formers' elevation. Usually a new comer is puzzled to find things very much like those on earth, and inconsistent with his previous ideas. This bewilderment, is greatly due to his ignorance regarding the conditions in the other world ; and it would indeed be a blessing to humanity to popularise this knowledge, so that it may be useful to one when he goes over there.

The discarnate beings are required to be under the supervision of some higher individuals, whom the Hindu spirits call Gurus and others name as Governors. Whatever the designation may be, the fact is there and the difference is insignificant. They cannot violate his orders. Any transgression on their part leads to severe punishment. Generally such a violation is impracticable as the supervision is very strict. It is meant for the welfare of the individuals themselves and one of the punishments is to send them back to the physical plane again. The spirits are usually averse to return to earth and have to do so only out of compulsion or as a result of their own actions.

There are some who state that they need nutrition and clothes. They are, of course, made

of the fine form of matter of which their bodies are composed. The physical particles being non-existent in the etheric regions, the component parts of such things cannot be made of the earthly atoms. They are mysteriously provided with such things and are not required to purchase them as a humorous critic may be led to ask. It is impossible to pursue this description too far, as it would lead to endless questions which are sometimes not answered by the spirits. The photographs of spirits go to show that they have all the necessary things there, otherwise these pictures would have been obtained in a nude state.

The individual passes through a period of rest which varies with different spirits. Communications have been obtained even a few hours after death which show that it is difficult to fix this interval of rest and unconsciousness. They then mind their duties which are determined according to their tendencies before death. They seem to be so busy that they have hardly any time to waste or to sit gossiping with their friends. The life in the spirit world seems to be very orderly and regular. The next region is uniformly stated by all spirits to be a very beautiful land incomparably superior to the Earth. Their opinion is very reliable, in as much as

they have experience of both the worlds. The daily life of the spirits can be gathered from the descriptions which they have given from time to time. Sometimes they give a detailed account of their daily routine in the spirit-world.

Some spirits have stated that they have to get up early in the morning, offer prayers to the Almighty, visit the temple, read books, take their food and pass most of their time in meditation. In some individual cases, the spirits are required by the Guru to do additional prayers and worship which they have to perform with great regularity. It seems that they are all the while engrossed more in spiritual matters, and have to obtain permission from Guru for visiting particular places. The daily life of all spirits is not of uniform character but is determined according to the individual attainments. A statesman who was busy throughout his life in guiding the destinies of his country is not expected to be engaged in simply offering prayers or practising Japa. He is occupied in some active work for the upliftment of his country, as is proved by the messages from our departed Leaders. In a seance at Monghyr, Deshbandhu Dass once communicated in my presence that he was making preparations for a Universal reformation of the minds of the Leaders. Similar messages have been received in different lands showing their interests in the

country which they loved. Lord Kitchener expressed his deep concern for the welfare of England, and warned his countrymen to be on their guard. They can influence the affairs of this world, by suggesting thoughts to those who are in a position to do some active work. Religious ideas being not changed for a considerable period, the individual offers his prayers in his own way as he was wont to do while living. That is the reason why a Hindu spirit writes about temples and a Muslim about Namaz in the next world.

The messages from the other world go to show that it is the counterpart of the earth, and most of the earthly things are found there. The maxim 'as above so below' gives in a nutshell an idea about that region; and hence we find that there are houses, schools, gardens and several other things, corresponding to those on earth. Those in higher regions take delight in reforming the lower ones, and the greatest joy of heaven as described by a spirit is emptying hell. The differences in sex continue, though not in the grosser physical sense. Marriage and procreation are not to be found there and all the addition is from the physical plane. The supervision of the higher ones is beneficial and highly conducive to their upliftment. The propensities of lower nature compel an individual to return to

earth-plane where only they can be satisfied. Their touch is intermittent with us and they know only those things which they have seen or can tell about scenes which they might have witnessed. They are not all-powerful or all knowing, although their vision is widened by the entry into the next world. They have got greater facility in going from one place to another, but cannot be present at both, at one and the same time. Children grow and the older spirits return to normal age by a process of rejuvenation. Love unites two souls together and such loving spirits are also found to stay in one abode. Earthly prejudices, orthodoxy, and bigotry gradually disappear by the disillusionment following death. Several times, a murdered individual is found to insist upon avenging the crime; but there are instances of reconciliation also between two brothers, who were at logger heads while living.

Spiritual progress being unlimited the things that conduce to it are love and disinterested service to humanity. Belief in a particular prophet or following a particular sect, does not necessarily help an individual in his progress. What is wanted is very little and very simple. It is summed up in the two words stated above,

and an individual following that line need have no fear in any way.

It is sometimes thought that we should not disturb the dead by communicating with them. This belief seems to have grown up out of ignorance regarding after-death conditions. There is no evidence in spiritualistic literature in support of this statement and all the messages go to show that they yearn to communicate with us and feel greatly disappointed by our indifference and non-cooperation. They are helped and strengthened by the touch with those whom they love, and hence it is a duty on the part of the living to help them in their endeavours. One of our spirit-friends distinctly averred that it would have been necessary for him to sit quiet if we had not tried these means of communication.

The knowledge of the spirits regarding future is a vexed question. Some persons are tempted to consult them only with a view to know the future. Replies to such questions are sometimes given by them on consulting higher beings, who are their occasional referees. Those who are not cautious in their statements often answer by guess-work and hence their assertions prove entirely false. But in the spiritualistic literature there are instances of marve-

lous predictions about future, and it is better to have an open mind about such matters. The ignorance of the spirit, the difficulty in transmitting his message or some other incidental irregularity enhances the complexity of the question. Swami Ramatirth when once asked about this point stated in his after-death message as follows. "You believe that the spirits do not change much of their worldly form, and they retain the limitations. They cannot shake them off all in a moment. If it were in their power to know future, it would have been a very dangerous thing and the harmony—eternal—harmony of the Universe would have been broken. Future is in our hands. Think, you are a dog and you become a dog. Ordinary things concerning life on earth can be known not immediately after leaving physical body, but after a good deal of waiting. But mind, it is only about ordinary things."

They seem to be ignorant about transcendental matters such as the object of the Universe, or the memory of previous lives. A spirit when once asked about these matters expressed his utter inability to solve such riddles. They affirm the existence of God, as the supreme cause of everything, but do not say that they had seen Him, although they aspire to do so. An atheist is not

made to suffer for his disbelief but is disillusioned by the facts as seen from the other world and by the experience of higher beings. The vastness of the region precludes any possibility of giving a detailed account thereof and one has to rest content with a bare outline of that unexplored land. Several volumes will have to be written to give sufficient information on several necessary points and one can read with advantage the volumes of Mr. Vale Owen who has written a lucid account after a study extending over a quarter of a century.

It would not be out of place here to say a few words about the theory of transmigration which is a stumbling block with many persons in the proper understanding of the principles of spiritualism. In fact, it is erroneously supposed that the law of reincarnation as understood by them is inconsistent with the possibility of spirit communication. Some of the orthodox Hindus, relying upon certain texts in the Bhagvat Gita and other sources, mistakenly think, that there is immediate reincarnation after death. The sooner this misconception is removed, the better it would be for them and for those whom they mislead. They fail to understand that their belief about immediate rebirth gives a go—bye not only to the possibility of spirit communication but all the reli-

gious rites such as the Shraddha or the Tarpana. (Offerings to the dead). The ancient seers who have laid down these injunctions had greater knowledge about these things in their own way, and hence they enjoined these ceremonies upon the living as a sort of duty towards the dead. The absence of direct touch with the next world led many to regard these ceremonies as merely based on custom and meant only to put one in mind of his ancestors. Some even went to the length of saying that they were introduced by the priests with selfish motives to earn their livelihood.

If we analyse the texts in the Bhagvad Gita, we find that Lord Krishna never denies the existence of Para Loka (next world) as the abode of the departed. The verse (Vā:ānsi jirnāni, etc.) commonly cited in this connection is never rightly understood and is taken as an authority in support of the theory of immediate rebirth. But when we read it along with other verses the misunderstanding is removed and we get at the right view of Lord Krishna. The simile between an old body and worn out clothes is not Poor-nopama (complete in all details), but is simply an illustration showing the similarity between the two objects. The right interpretation of the text is that just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and

takes up new ones, similarly the soul, the finer principle in an individual gives up an old body and passes on to a new one (physical). This does not necessarily mean that the entry into another physical body is immediate without any interval between the two states of existence. The various other statements of Lord Krishna himself cannot be rightly interpreted, if we do not follow this view.

When one admits the existence of the next world and the stay of an individual in it after death, the period of that sojourn becomes an important point to be considered. No average can be drawn regarding that period and one ought not to be dogmatic in this respect. The information from the other world goes to show that the stay depends upon an individual's Karma both here and hereafter; and the departed, as already pointed out are generally unwilling to return to earth. They come back sometimes as a sort of punishment, or to gain new experiences which could not be obtained there, or to fulfill some other mission for the uplift of humanity. The laws in this respect

are very complicated and each case is decided according to one's Karma. The individual cannot come to communicate after rebirth, and the information regarding him is supplied by some other kindred spirits. Sometimes the information is verifiable and goes to prove the veracity of the communicating spirit. A few such instances have been observed by me wherein the spirit-message was strikingly found to be true.

The oldest spirit that communicated with me was that of King Ramadev Rao of Vijayanagar who was killed in the Battle of Talikota in 1465 A. D. He wrote in sanskrit through a medium who had little knowledge of the language and gave striking replies to the questions put to him in Hindi. When asked as to how he could understand our questions he replied "Being in subtle body, I can read your mental state." Western spiritualists have been able to get into touch with still older spirits like Joan of Arc or even Confucius, the great Chinese Prophet.

The law of reincarnation is admitted by almost all spiritualists by the evidence obtained through spiritualistic means. It does not depend upon a certain text-tradition or intuition, but upon the

statements of those who have passed through the gateway of death. Sometimes the information on these points is received from spirits who had no belief in them, but had to admit by the facts which they could see in the next world. They assert that it was inconsistent with the traditional faith of some regarding the Day of Judgment, but facts were too strong for them and their force needed a reversal in their ideas.

CHAPTER VII

Interesting Messages.

Several times in our seances, we got very interesting matter throwing much light, on the mysteries of the next world. Some of them were held under the auspices of the Indian Spiritualistic Society. The messages are of general interest and deal with many questions regarding the conditions of life after death. Some of the names have been omitted out of deference to the feelings of the individuals concerned.

1. Message About Forbearance.

Subhadrabai gave us the following message, on the above subject. She said "It is right according to your view to be retaliative to those who have troubled you. I don't blame you for holding that view. But shall I be allowed to stay in Satya-Loka if I do likewise?, No, never. If I were to do such mean and wicked deeds, I shall have to forego my pleasures and shall have to hover round your world. Pray tell me. You know from books the consequences of certain deeds, but here I shall relate my short experience. Two years back, I had a friend

here who seemed very sad when he came over this side. He had done charity, and was also virtuous. After finishing his appointed work, he used to sit thinking in solitude. After a few days, like this he seemed a little pleased. Then we asked him the cause of his former dejection, whereupon he said "I was happy but the conduct of my relatives, at the time of my death, was unpleasant." That irritated me, and created feeling a of hatred for them. I was therefore deliberating upon the means of troubling them. Then he resolved to tease them, and did accordingly.

But what was the consequence? He at once went to the lowest region i. e. to the worst place, and is unhappy beyond imagination. Then would I follow his example? Please tell me. Those who want to take revenge should be prepared to suffer after death. In this world there are people of both sorts. Those that have forbearance should try to put up with the insulting conduct of others without retaliating. Those that are of the above temperament enjoy the bliss of Heaven. Ofcourse such advice is not heeded. Forbearance is a Divine gift I cannot say more. People are free to act as they like."

2. Sin and Punishment.

Regarding punishment she expressed as follows :—

“The law of this world is that sin and virtue are taken into consideration before inflicting punishment. There is no separate punishment for murder or such other wicked deeds. Here punishment for all misdeeds begins at one time. When once it has commenced, then it is inflicted in order of the misdeeds. There are different sorts of punishments. When the time for punishment begins, then there is a series of it, and so also about enjoyments. When the spirits suffer, they like to return to your world, and when their time for enjoyment comes, they hate returning to the Mrityu-Loka. They feel very happy here.

“There is no separate punishment for ordinary breaches of promise. A man is punished after considering all his deeds. If there be a preponderance of virtue, that is separately considered. So also in the opposite case. Some say we shall first enjoy for our virtue, while others like to suffer for the sin, in as much as there is only a little quantity of it. But it does not depend upon the choice of all. Only those who are very virtuous and have only nominally sinned are allowed to have such a choice. In the case of ordinary persons, all his deeds are taken into consideration at once. Men can be

classified under three heads:—‘good, indifferent, and bad.’ Those in the last class are most sinful. Nobody waits for their choice. Murderers generally come in this class. Majority of people can be included in the middle class. I shall tell you one instance regarding this after consulting another spirit.”

3. A spirit's view about religion and morality.

In a seance, we had the pleasure of conversing with spirit D. who gave much valuable instruction on religious practices. During his earth-life he was a very God-fearing man and led a remarkably moral life and never coveted wealth. His statements are particularly important and throw much light on the path of life.

He said “I am quite restless, because I did not perform any virtuous deeds (Punnya Karma) during my life. I must do something here. Question. What do you mean by Punnya Karma?

Spirit “I must explain what we regard as Punnya Karma. The prevalent view that sacrifices and pilgrimages conduced to spiritual progress is wrong, but let it remain. I did nothing for the satisfaction of my soul. I could not satisfactorily carry out my duty. Service was not my only duty. Sacrifice and religious practices are not

the perfect means of spiritual elevation. They show only the way to those who are quite immersed in the worldly matters. We must turn our attention to God by self-sacrifice etc. and realise that our birth and end are in Him. To love all beings is real virtue. It is not that one can get some virtue by feeding the Brahmins and not the Untouchables. It is necessary to lead a morally good life.

T : But this is rather vague and commonplace. Will you please make it more clear ?

Spirit : The very fact that I find myself in difficulty leads me to say that religious practices are not the only way of attaining God. To put it in quite a different way, morality is the right way."

4. Daily life of a spirit.

At a seance, spirit—A, related to Mr. Karporeker, gave the following interesting information about his daily life.

He said, "I am quite peacefully passing my days here. My mind is in no way agitated. I go to prayer, if I like. I pass my time, in an orchard. I feel very happy there. I led a very busy life on earth. Now, I am quite tired of it.

Here also some persons are remarkably active. I do not know how they can carry on those activities. It seems that earth life is insufficient for their active minds.

“There is a spring, in a corner of the garden. It is covered with trees and creepers on all sides. I think that this might be what is said to be heavenly joy. At least, I do not want anything else, and am praying God not to deprive me of this pleasure. I am sure, He will never get angry with me.”

5. A Wife's anxiety for her husband.

In a seance, the wife of Mr. K. one of our members appeared and communicated as follows. She seemed much concerned about the welfare of her husband. When requested to write, she said, “You have done well in staying here today. I greatly wish to talk with you, but do not get an opportunity to do so. Why are you sad now a days?” She refused to reply further questions, possibly because, a stranger was present at the seance. She answered some questions regarding her identity and gave correct number of her brothers and sisters, through a medium who did not know anything about them.

Further on, she stated, "I am thinking whether I should write or not, I cannot make up my mind. To tell you the truth, I came here to talk with you. But now I do not want to trouble you. Please try on some other occasion."

After the stranger had gone from the seance she said, "I cannot bear to see your troubles. I feel very much because you have none to love you. Don't you think so? Or is it that you conceal your thoughts? I never thought that you would feel so much for me. Do not do so, at least for the sake of children. I feel shy to say more plainly. I cannot bear your distress. I shall be glad if you are happy. A Parsee spirit has come now. I shall tell you further in your dream."

6. Temples in the spirit-world.

Mr. Doraswamy, a spirit related to Mr. Iyer, gave wonderful description of the spirit world and said. "You all want to know how the temples are here. They are alike, devoid of parapharnelia. They are all alike, as we have only a few temples of the same sort. There is no difference as we all worship only one God and there is no dualism. Take a mirror with mercury behind it. Any one looking into it, will see his

own image and not which is behind it. If any one wants to see behind it, he should separate the mercury and see through the glass. Then everything will be clear. Similarly, every one in the earthly world is looking into the mirror presented by a learned man. Hence many faiths and religions are produced. But all of them are correct and practical for those who see them. He who does not look into it, can not know, and would not believe what the others say. A learned man who understands that the mercury is behind, will simply scorn and ridicule it, by saying that it is the action of mercury. Maya on the dense atmosphere supervenes the mother earth, and you all are blind and do not know what is behind it.

“ It is only for the information of Mr. Rishi, that I answer, and he will know everything when the time comes. The spirits are very glad for his selfless work and we wish him well.

Question.....Will you give us some more information about your daily life? Answer...Yes, I stopped that day with our meeting and going to the temple, the first item in the morning as you may term, is our devotion. The fixed time or hour, for the work is not limited. But we all observe one rule and stick to it. The second item being

our going to the divine angel, for learning the gospel of truth or some wise sayings, and then we all go to the temple where we pray for any time we can fix our mind, and then we have a small dinner of fruits only and we consider it a sin to spoil the Agni by cooking or frying. Then, we hold a debate among the learned men, where those who are ignorant are the hearers. After that we are allowed to go away, where, during your pleasant evenings, we who know that some are interested in us, and give us a chance of communicating with them on the Mother Earth, go to those places in expectation of having a chance of speaking with those who were once our near and dear. We are at times, disappointed as one of us gets the chance and others who cannot force to the front are required to go back to their respective Planes.

“We always take permission for our departure elsewhere. To explain some secrets, I have to take the master’s permission. When once it is said, it should be perfect and above criticism.”

7. A spirit’s thoughts on Pilgrimage and Shraddha.

At the seance, Doraswami’s spirit was asked about the utility of pilgrimage etc., whereupon he stated as follows. “There is no necessity to go on

pilgrimage or feeding one set of people calling themselves 'Brahmins', but help the poor and clothe the needy—with discrimination. Indiscriminate charity is an evil and makes more mischief. But people in the earthly world are in the limited sphere of activity. It is not that the world itself is limited, but the individuals by limiting their minds conceive the world as such. To one who has understood the world life there is no necessity of image worship, pilgrimage or charity.

Question ... What about the efficacy of Shraddha.

Answer ... It is all necessary as you do not understand why you should do it. It is all the action of the Karma and each earthly person should walk in the path of Karma or duty until, he is in a position to learn the truth of Dnyana. Till then it is a sin to ignore the religious thing."

In this connection, at a seance in Lahore, in the house of a well-known Arya—Samajist, his departed son communicated that there was a difference of opinion in the spirit world also, about the necessity of performing Shraddha. Some spirits insist upon that, while others do not. The mentality of the spirit seems to determine the question, No hard and fast rule can be laid down about this.

8. Key to Spiritual Elevation.

The talk with Raghavendra Acharya, a spirit related to one of our members, Mr. Acharya, was highly instructive. During his life time, he was an orthodox Vaishnav Brahmin, and had led a thoroughly religious life. In spite of his orthodoxy, he did not lay much stress upon the forms and formalities of religion. His ideas seemed to be evolved and consequently he advised the purity of thought and action, as the key to spiritual elevation.

His statements are particularly important, in as much as they show how the views of a spirit are broadened by his stay in the next world. He was not dogmatic about the necessities of ceremonies like the Shraddha, and pointed out that they were only conducive to the welfare of those, who performed them. The number of the planes was seven, although it may be more, if subdivided.

9. New year Day Activities.

The resemblance of spirit world to earthly conditions was strikingly illustrated by a message from Subhadrabai. It being the Hindu New year day, she stated that there were many activities on that day in her region. Impatient readers will at once jump to the conclusion that the

message must be due to our subconscious self, and they may not believe me, when I say that I had not the least idea about it on that occasion. She was in a great hurry, when the message was delivered, and said that she had to make preparations for attending those functions.

10. Dying Experiences.

Sushilabai, wife of Mr. Surve, who is one of our members, stated her dying experiences as follows. She said, "Two angels having the form of human beings appeared and took me away. Till then, I was feeling wordly pain, which then immediately ceased and I felt happy like a man who was about to start on a journey. At first, I was somewhat puzzled by the new scenes, men and places but after a short while, I remembered past things and began to have a hazy memory just as that of a dream. Now I do not feel anything and regard it as world's play".

11. Pleasures in the next world.

The next phase of life is uniformly described by the spirits as a very happy state of existence, far better than our present earthly stay. To us it is all incomprehensible, and we often

ask our spirit friends about this point. In our seance, one spirit, very lucidly described the other world. He said, "when a magician begins his play and draws a number of rupees from his bag, the people are led to think that he must be very happy, in as much as he can create as much money as he likes. But after the play is over he begs from the people. Can he really create money? If it be so, why would he afterwards beg for money? Similar is the case with the earthly pleasures like going to quench one's thirst by a mirage. The people after death are usually engaged in spiritual matters and hence feel very happy on coming here."

12. Experiences of suicide.

A very instructive message was received in another seance, when a spirit who had committed suicide told his experiences after death. He was brought particularly by Mr. G. and clearly proved his identity by giving the year of his death and, several names not known to the medium. He stated "I am happy now but for the first few years I was terribly suffering for my deeds on the earth and subsequent growing ignominy of my end there. I had to pass through grave crisis all these years, after my

coming over here, and I would candidly ask one and all not to commit suicide for the love of anything. One may suffer all the ills one may be put to, but never for a life, commit suicide. Mind, I was punished constantly as a man is tortured in jail and police custody. Pricking pains is the sensation caused when one is tortured ceaselessly. I give you all that is there in the same spirit and light of experience, for my keen desire is that no body else should suffer the pangs, I have suffered. I was suffering till two years from this day since my death. That is why I say that not worse enemy of mine should ever commit suicide. I was very near the earth plane and by the penance and good blessings from the Guru I am getting on alright here. Mercy was shown to me by my constant appeals to him for I could not bear the ills showered upon me. *Do give publicity to my message in the interest of public good.* I thank you for remembering me, an out-caste and a fallen man as I have been. The torture in the first place is nothing but what you call Naraka (Hell)."

13. After Death Experiences of an Educated Lady.

The next phase of life seems to be an organised region having its own ways. The denizens of

that abode are required to lead their lives in accordance with the dictates of those who govern them and look after their welfare. The wife of a respectable gentleman in Calcutta came to communicate and stated her experiences proving the above facts. She said, "I am practising self-purification here which includes morning bath, worship and reading of religious books. I never did these things while living, but was told to do so by the servant of God. I am quite happy here. For some days, I can not go to some other sphere."

14. Age and Mediumship.

The requirements for Mediumship are as yet little known and there is no outward physical sign or feature by which it can be prejudged. Nor does the faculty depend upon age or sex, although usually women are found to be more mediumistic than males. In our seance, Mr. J. E. Saklatvala had the pleasure of getting a message from his dear son. He is in advanced age and his eye-sight is also much impaired, but in spite of these physical disabilities he could write automatically and get a message from his son. On two or three occasions previous to this seance, he could hardly draw a line but on this occasion his hand was more powerfully controlled and he felt a distinct push, as it were, from some extraneous force. His daughter who

was present in the circle, could not write although the spirit at first expressed his willingness to communicate through her. Possibly that was her first attempt and as such, she might not have succeeded on that occasion but as Sir A. Conan Doyle says, "Every woman is an undeveloped medium and she should try her power of automatic writing." She is also sure to succeed, if she perseveres in her attempts.

15. A Deceased Son Winds Up A Clock.

The ways of spirit-friends to work and help their relatives are indeed mysterious. They cannot be accounted for by any natural laws so far known to us, and hence we are astonished to hear incidents which sometimes take place of their own accord. Mr. S. who was deeply afflicted by the loss of his dear son and had several communications from him. He reports a strange phenomenon which happened in his house in his own presence. One day at about 9 P.M. the clock in his room not being wound up stopped ringing. It was the practice of his deceased son to wind up the clock and hence Mr. S. just thought of his son and requested him to wind up the clock as he used to do during his life time. Strange, as it may seem, the clock was set

right and went on ringing for full twelve hours till 9 A. M. the next day. Mr. S. reported the story to his friend the next morning and he was astonished to see that the clock was ringing although it was not wound up on the previous day and had stopped ringing before Mr. S. requested his son to look after it.

16. The Rest After Death.

It is regarded by some, that persons who have passed over very recently cannot come to communicate with their friends or relatives. There are instances which go to show that this is not a universal rule. In our seance one day we asked a spirit about a doctor who had recently died, where upon our spirit friend told us. "He is not likely to be able to come up for some time. He is in a lying—in condition. He has to remain in that condition for some time, before he regains his consciousness. If one is evolved spiritually he has not to pass that period of probation, but others have to do so. I shall bring him with me when he is alright, I am in charge of the hospital about which I have told you previously. He has been brought in there and hence I knew that he has come over here or else I had no occasion to know that." The above statements show that some spirits remain in

a state of rest after their transition, and the period varies with different individuals according to their actions.

17. Existence of God.

In another seance Mr. Rahate, got very instructive messages from his brother Mr. Gopalrao. He was asked about the mysterious workings of God and his existence was a puzzle to many. The occasion for such a question was the sudddn death of the neighbour of Mr. Rahate. The spirit explained by saying that he was still aspiring to see God but he had not succeeded in his efforts.

He proved his identity by mentioning a fact which was quite un-known to the medium. For instance he was asked to come on a particular day and to watch the ceremony. When asked about the ceremony he mentioned that it was the "Shradha" day which the medium did not know. Facts like these bring home to a student of spiritualism the existence and identity of the communicating spirit, although there are several times many discrepancies in their messages particularly about their names.

18. A Strange Experience.

Spirits are human beings like us without the physical body. They retain the individual characteristics and emotions. Their love and anxiety for their friends on earth remains unabated. In a seance, when I was overworried, I wanted to have a talk with one of our spirit friends. Mr. Oak who is our occasional visitor from the spirit-world was present to respond to our call. After a few minutes' hearty talk, I asked him about my worries and other matters in reply to which he expressed his inability to answer. When I persisted in my attempt to get replies he remained silent. This was rather annoying to me, as I expected some substantial advice from him. The writing stopped and the table also gave no indications. A little while after, the table again began to move and I found that Mr. Oak was again present and said that he had seen Subhdrabai who had come there to answer my questions as he was unable to do so. Later on, Subhdrabai wrote that Mr. Oak hurriedly came to her and requested her to accompany him to satisfy me. As she had very little time that evening she said that she would explain everything next morning.

19. Knowledge of the Spirit.

Although the spirits are not all knowing or all powerful, still they seem to know much more

of mundane matters than we do. In a seance, Gopalarao Rahate when asked to explain certain points referred to by his brother he advised him to go to Upasani Maharaj for the solution of those questions. Mr. Jayakar who was the medium on the occasion did not know that Upasani Maharaj had come to Bombay and it was very strange that the spirit should have advised his brother to go to him. Mr. Rahate tried to see the saint but was told that he had left Bombay on the following day.

20. A Husband's Concern.

In a couple of seances, the spirit of a young widow gave us very touching messages by her own hand. Vimala, (Name of the widow) knew nothing about spiritualism and had never attended a seance before. Her husband communicated that he was very anxious about her welfare, felt keenly for her mental agonies and advised her to stay in Bombay, as in his opinion it would be more conducive to restore her mental equilibrium. The widow was much impressed by the message and felt quite convinced about the truth of spirit communication. None of the sentences written by her had entered her brain and her subconscious mind played no part in the whole affair.

21. Subhadrabai's thoughts on pleasure and pain.

Subhadrabai often gives very valuable information regarding the spirit-world. She seems so eager to communicate that sometimes, we have to close the sitting for want of questions. Her punctuality and interest in this cause are experienced by several of our members. Her activities are well-known. Not only in India but also in England. I learn from Mrs. Robertson that she occasionally visits her seances. On one occasion she came as usual and expressed some thoughts on pleasure and pain. She said that every one tries for happiness but no one realises that pain follows pleasure. No body is completely happy. The spirits who say that they are quite happy sometimes do so in order to please their relatives and have to obtain permission for stating such garbled truth.

22. The proof of spirit Identity.

The identity of the communicating spirit is an important point and deserves to be tested by all reasonable means. In a seance, the spirit of Mr. G. was asked to give the name of his daughters which were correctly stated with the exception of one. The medium—Mr. Jayakar did not know them and had no

means of knowing those names. Generally the spirits find it difficult to convey names through a strange medium, and the reason ascribed to this difficulty is that names do not convey an idea and hence the spirits are greatly hampered in transmitting them through a medium.

23. A Remarkable Table Experience.

The students of spiritualism are usually conversant with ordinary movements of a table at the time of the seance, but once we had very interesting experience regarding the movements of the table. One of our spirit-friends had promised to become visible at about 9 P. M. Some how or other, we could not keep the appointment and started the seance at 10 P. M., when we found the table moving so violently that it was a remarkable experience even to us. Four or five times, the table went on walking and actually forced us to a wall in the room. When we tried to bring it to its original position it was dashing its legs like an unwilling child. Further on, we placed our hands beneath the surface of the table when we found that it was, as it were, jumping and giving very violent strokes in every direction. The force of the table was most notable, as it required a regular physical feat to control it. Unfortunately such

phenomena cannot be controlled or commanded, as it entirely depends upon the volition of our spirit-friends. Regarding the visibility, we were told by Subhadrabai that night, that it would take about an hour for the experiment, and as it was very late, we most reluctantly postponed the attempt for some other occasion.

24. Talks with Unknown Spirits.

Although it is the usual experience that our friends and relations on the other side of death, come to communicate with us, still at times, we are favoured with visits from persons in the spirit-world, not acquainted with us during their life-time. One Mr. Oak and Mr. Kalambikar, who were not known to us during their earthly-life, often come to talk with us and give us interesting and instructive messages regarding the spirit-world. During our seances they tried to prove their existance by much personal matter. At times, while narrating his tales, Mr. Kalambikar seemed over-powered with grief, remembering the trouble at the end of his life. Mr. Oak was much reluctant to give any information and only answered questions put to him by us. The mentality of the two spirits was entirely different even though the medium was the same, a fact which goes to prove the existance and identity of the two different entities.

Mr. Oak stated that he was a resident of Pachwad in Khandesh, and there he lived about twelve years ago. He is a very humorous spirit and is in continual touch with us for over five years. He states that his wife still lives at his native place with her father. Among other matters he has given a very graphic description of a prison in the spirit world.

Mr. Kalambikar, has very vividly described his dying experiences in which he stated that two angels had come to receive him, to escort him to his place there. When living, he used to live in Nana's Peth, Poona and has given the names of his friends and relations who are still there.

25. An Explanation About Dreams.

Subhadrabai threw much light on my recollections of dreams. At times she visits me in sleep but I do not remember the impression after waking up. When I ask her the reason of this forgetfulness on my part, she stated it was mostly due to my not immediately waking up. If I were to get up just after her visit, it would be possible to remember some of the experiences. It sometimes happens, that I recollect other dreams which in fact, do not interest me so much. Most of the recollections as she stated were the product of my

own imagination, and had no substratum of reality in them. I very often suggest her to meet me in dream, but she says, that it would serve no purpose, as I do not recollect anything afterwards. She prefers the intercourse, which we regularly hold every morning and she is unfailingly present at 6 A. M. It would be incredible to many that she is very regular in her attendance every morning, as well as in other seances and is most anxious to help me in my endeavours to spread this knowledge.

26. A quarrel in the spirit world.

The next phase of life being very much like the one that we are living, it is not incredible that we should get information which resembles our earthly conditions. In our seances on two occasions, we were told by our spirit friend Mr. Kalambikar, that he witnessed a quarrel between two denizens of that region and gave a very graphic description of the same. He said "Yesterday, while I was walking towards a garden, I saw a crowd of persons at a little distance. I was hesitating to go but made up my mind to proceed there. After pushing my way through the crowd, I found that two persons were quarreling furiously among themselves. I thought that I should stop the quarrel but got a blow in

return. Though enraged at this, I left them and stood at a distance from them. But how can this injustice be tolerated here? How funny it was, when four of the God's messengers who were passing by the way, observed the state of things. They caught hold of the two peace-breakers and began to carry them. I told them how I attempted to stop their quarrel but they did not listen to me. Whereupon they became very angry and arrested them and told me that I should accompany them. I was repenting as to why I got myself involved in this affair. Really speaking I had nothing to do with them, but I could not restrain myself from the desire of checking the quarrel. I intervened and this was the result! What is the use of after thoughts? I had to follow them ungrudgingly. We were then taken to a superior officer who always decides such cases and inflicts punishments according to their faults. Of course, it was my first occasion to go there. I related the whole account as soon as I was asked to do so. Then upon due inquiry and consideration, he gave the decision and ordered the guilty to be whipped. I got out of the trouble quite safe. Afterwards I gave a piece of advice, for which they thanked me and asked my pardon for their conduct towards me. Since then we have become friends."

27. Rejuvenation in the spirit world.

Many persons are curious to know whether there is old age in the spirit world, and if so what is the future state of such old men. Subhadrabai, enlightens us on this matter and states that there is a process of rejuvenation which varies with ordinary and advanced souls. The latter, by their power can stay unchanged for thousands of years, while the former are either rejuvenated or are born after a period of ninety years.

28. A spirit Makes a Joke.

Continuity of life being the law of nature, humour is also met with, in some spirit-messages. A spirit while communicating with his friend said, "The cats run. They catch mice, and they eat them. You run, catch money and do not use it, but hoard it. Why? Are you more foolish than cats? You will also die one day, as cats die. Why do you then hoard money at all? I am very angry with you. You have forgotten me. I am very, poor, but don't think, I will go without giving you a good lesson. Give me your money, I shall enjoy it."

29. A message from Lokamanya Tilak.

Great men who worked for their country during their life-time, do sometimes favour us with

their messages. Lack of efforts on our parts makes it impossible for them to communicate with their friends and sympathisers. It is our sacred duty to make such efforts to facilitate their way. On one occasion, Lok. B. G. Tilak the well-known patriot gave the following message. He said, "I am always ready to help those who think intently of the salvation of mother land. India is in a melting pot. Work, suffer and exact the thing, we have been aspiring so long. I regret the Hindu-Moslem tension is growing worse day by day."

About the spiritualistic movement in india he said, "This is a noble cause and whatever is noble, I do not think, any one will hesitate to praise. India needs men to be efficient in any province of knowledge that is noble. Push on and one day you will get the fruit of your work."

Identity of spirit-handwriting.

It is often asked whether the script in automatic writing resembles that of the spirit, during his life time. My experience is that very often it does not, as the spirit has to write through the hand of a medium, and naturally cannot follow his mode of writing. But once we had a remarkable experience in this connection. In a seance with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta M. L. A., he could get the

very hand-writing of his deceased wife and he admitted among other things that the signature closely resembled her way of writing. Several other cases of identity have been reported by other experimenters.

Patience in communication.

The need of patience in getting messages from our beloved dead is several times fully realised. One of our new members was keenly desirous of getting into touch with his departed wife, and he attended a few seances with that object, but got no results. On one occasion, he could get much information from his father-in-law and was naturally convinced about the truth of spirit-communication. But that was not enough for him. He was aspiring to know something about his wife and we therefore requested our spirit-friends to trace her out. After some failures, the husband could get very consoling and convincing messages from his dear wife. Such incidents bring home to us the extreme necessity of patience and perseverance in psychic research.

Language in the spirit-world.

It is a vexed question whether language is a barrier in the next world. Our spirit-friend Mr. Oka when asked about this point replied "Several times the difficulty is felt and we take

the aid of an interpreter on such occasions. Generally the exchange of thoughts in the spirit-world is carried on mentally ; but this power varies with different individuals, who then resort to other devices of communication. Writing in different languages is still more difficult and requires greater power and knowledge." About the experience of some sitters getting messages in foreign languages, he said, that they are often mixed up with their own ideas.

A spirit draws pictures.

In a seance one evening, when we sat for some message from a particular spirit, the entity which came that evening would not write his name or give any particulars regarding himself. He stated by the Table that he was related to Mr. Jayakar who was also in the circle. Further replies from the Table indicated that he was an artist and had died about eleven years ago. In spite of our persistent requests he would not write anything even through Mr. Jayakar who can usually write pretty fast. Eventually, it turned out that the spirit wanted to draw some pictures after finishing which he disclosed his name, and gave some personal messages. He drew the picture of a bird, a horse and a human figure. The medium cannot normally draw any pictures.

Medical advice from spirit-world.

On three occasions Dr. Abraham the departed brother of Dr. J. Ezekiel, diagnosed diseases of the patients and wrote out prescriptions for them. The ingredients of the drugs were pointed out on the Ouija Board and were found to be efficacious. The patients were said to be suffering from Rheumatism, Dyspnea and heart-trouble. The spirit said that he had invisible means of examining the patients and had examined the pulse, heart-knocks, and arteries of the persons concerned. During the examination the patients were asked to sit quietly for about five to seven minutes.

CHAPTER VIII.

Children in the Spirit-world.

A chapter about children may seem inappropriate in a book that deals almost exclusively with one particular spirit. The tie of affection led me to investigate this subject and have the experiences mentioned in this volume. An equally strong tie, leads me to say a few words about children, who pass over when they had not even the power to use their tongue.

The world pays very little attentions to the fate of such young souls. There was no authentic information so far, as regards their condition after death. Spiritualism has thrown much light upon this point and we have now got much definite information regarding it. Continuity of life being the basic principle of spiritualism, children have just the same ideas after death and their etheric bodies grow in the next world. They are nurtured and taken care of by the invisible beings in the great unseen region. Strange as it may seem, their education also is not neglected, and we find that they progress spiritually in that condition of existence.

The information on this point is uniform in all countries and hence we need not be sceptical about its credibility.

My daughter passed away when she was hardly a year old. For four years after her death I had no knowledge about the possibility of spirit communication. When I became aware of it, I learnt from her mother that she was with her in the spirit world and was well cared for till she took charge of her. Some time later the girl herself came to communicate, and spoke as she would have done, had she been living now. She stated that she was attending a school there, and gave its vivid description. She does not come often as her mother does.

A Funny incident.

On one occasion, she wrote, "My mother pressed me to come to you, May I tell you a funny incident? You see, one day, I accompanied mother to our great Guru. When Mother saluted him, I also did the same. He then asked me "Child may I send you to a new city? "There upon I enquired," where please?" He replied, "Mritya Loka." Being afraid, I began to weep and said "I shall not go, I feel very happy here." Looking towards mother he said, "You just ask her," When she asked me, I was very much afraid and clasping his

feet said, "Do what you like" but don't send me from this place." I don't know what he felt thereby. Then he said, "Well done, my child, Never mind, go. I will never send you. I just tested you. In this way I escaped from that danger. I am going on well here. I like this very much. Mother and I help you in this work."

With reference to children, Mr. Bush wrote to me as follows :

"It does seem to be a law that when spirit people return to the earth-plane they have to take on earth conditions and most usually manifest in the condition as they left earth. The old man appears as an old man, a cripple as a cripple, the child as a child, a woman appears as a woman and male as a male. After much experience in returning into the physical conditions, they can modify and overcome these limitations and infirmities of the flesh to a large extent. If they did not return as they left, there would be no recognition. Your daughter comes back to you in the form and manner you can identify, yet I feel sure that in her little head there is much wisdom. Spiritually she may have grown to be a woman, but physically she manifests as a child.

"To obtain the greatest work out of an organism it must reach maturity. If a person dies in in-

fancy (even if still-born and has never lived apart from its mother's body) the spirit, inner structure the immature, undeveloped spirit-body goes on growing until it is fully grown. This is the unanimous teaching of all communications from the other side. The child grows up to manhood or womanhood and old man or woman returns to the prime of life, feels young again because, age and its weaknesses appertain only to the physical."

Description of a School.

In a seance on 4-8-28 she came unexpectedly and gave a vivid description of her school in the spirit-world. She said "There is a large courtyard and a garden within which there is a building which is divided into seven parts. The first is for prayer, the second is devoted to teach the mentality to be observed before prayer and also as to what should be done previous to it. The third is for study, where we are taught everything. The fourth is used as a dining hall. The fifth is meant for teaching austerities. Meditation is compulsory every day. Sanskrit is also taught here. The sixth is a meeting-room for all teachers, and the seventh for giving instructions in gardening.

" My daily life is as follows :—I get up at 4-30 A.M., and have to be ready at 5 for prayer after finishing all other duties. It takes one hour, and

then we visit the temple in company with a teacher. By the time, we return home, it is 7-30 when we commence our study. We read books for half an hour. Their pages are not bound, and some of them are written on the barks of trees. The lines are red and the leaves are bigger than this table. We are not allowed to touch them. They are kept hanging. We spend three hours in study and again go to the temple from which we return at 12. Then we have our refreshments and commence study. Most of our time till 4-30 passes in practising religious observances,—study,—and meditation. After that half an hour is spent in giving instructions in gardening. Then again we visit the temple at about 7 and stay there for prayer etc. A teacher accompanies us on our way home. At ten o'clock there is again prayer after which we take our refreshments. After this some sit reading or doing something else. We sleep from 12 to 4. Boys and girls do not stay together, but girls of all castes live together."

states necessary for success have been pointed out in a previous chapter containing the extracts from Mr. Bush's letters which contain much useful information. A student of this knowledge will do well to bear them in mind as they show the pitfalls to be avoided while trying these experiments.

The co-operation of the denizens of the next world is the next important point for consideration. They must have the necessary ardent desire to communicate with their friends on earth. We can not control or command them to do a particular thing, and it is idle to claim such powers. Love is a great binding force which attracts them to us, and other conditions permitting they manage to communicate with us. They have also to accustom themselves to manipulate the psychic power, and hence sometimes they cannot properly convey their thoughts though they try their utmost to do so. Some of them are so keen that they act as guides and introduce other spirits at the seances. The invocation at a sitting works as a force of attraction and they feel inclined to attend it. Several times they come of their own accord and unknown spirits are also occasionally met with.

The various devices for spirit communication are simply aids to facilitate automatic writing and serve no other purpose. The mediumistic power is the *sine qua non* in seances and no results can be obtained by any device if the necessary power be not there. Ignorant persons have made much of them without understanding the underlying principle, and hence many persons are duped by false

promises. Attempts are being made to invent a machine whereby communication may be possible without the aid of a medium, but experts are of opinion that they are not likely to succeed as the psychic power cannot be obtained through any physical apparatus. A delicate instrument may reduce its necessity to the least possible extent, but cannot altogether do away with it.

Communication with the unseen-world can be established by diverse ways some of which are Table turning, Automatic writing, and Trance. Each is important in its own way and serves the sitter in getting much evidential matter. The higher phenomena like Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, Direct Voice, Photography and Materialization though more impressive are less common and difficult to develop. Automatic writing is the easiest way of communication and I would advise every inquirer to try it in his Home-circle. There is no easy way to success and one has to try patiently till good results are obtained. It is difficult to lay down laws in this science, because the law works from both sides viz. from this world as well as the next. Even with the best medium you may some times draw a blank, and some times you get rapid results. As Mr. Bush, writes most of the process is worked from the spirit-side of life and we have only to allow our friends there to use our power. Congenial atmosphere and perfect harmony amongst the sitters are the primary requisites for success.

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